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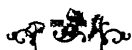
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TO A FEW FRIENDS
AND TO MY MOTHER
IN GRATITUDE AND WITH
DEEP AFFECTION
. I DEDICATE THIS BOOK



Foreword

CHARLES SPENCER CHAPLIN, film comedian extraordinary and the most widely known figure in the history of motion pictures, holds the distinction of enduring for twenty-five years as the outstanding, if somewhat enigmatic, personality of the screen. To retain such universal popularity, in its deeper sense, in an industry gradually but surely taking its place as an integral part of the arts, an industry which all too often raises its favorite to stardom overnight only to hurl him back into oblivion with equal celerity, this achievement of Charlie Chaplin's becomes worthy of serious consideration.

What manner of man is this who sits securely upon his golden throne of millions poured into his coffers by a world-wide audience? What sort of man can defy any challenge to the universal appeal of a single characterization, who can resist for ten years the more modern medium for expression, the transition of silent films into talking pictures?

Surely this sustained hold upon the public taste,

the public affection, implies a certain artistry—genius, if you will. And there are few to deny that Charlie Chaplin has brought into bold relief the ancient art of pantomime as a portrayal of modern, human life.

Chaplin has been the subject of more writing and fewer accurate delineations than most of his contemporaries throughout the years. He has enjoyed the paradoxical status of being the man everybody knows yet nobody *knows*. Protected by a self-imposed isolation in his private life, he has had, nevertheless, certain dramatic phases in his life, two marriages and their subsequent dissolutions, emblazoned on the front pages of American newspapers for weeks and months at a time. And when we reflect upon the adverse publicity to which he was subjected at these times, some of it careless of the truth, it is small wonder that Charles Chaplin is wary of revealing himself to the serious biographer or that he bends over backward in expurgating any story about himself which is submitted to him for his approval. A true biography of him must, of necessity, be an unauthorized one to survive with any value as an accurate chronicle.

Because of this consistent discouragement to biographers, few stories of any length, or what is more important, strength, have been uncovered in this writer's search for material pertinent to this book. One, a mild little book written by W. Dodg-

son Bowman in 1931, makes no effort to trace the pattern of the man behind the artist and succeeds in not tracing it. It can be assumed that the manuscript of this book was either censored by its subject or prepared with the wish uppermost in the mind of the writer not to offend. Consequently, it has scant value in depicting the living, vital Chaplin. The most colorful and dramatic, the most revealing and not always creditable, episodes in the life of the King of Comedy are veiled by meager paragraphs or ignored with an airy sycophancy which destroys the value of the book as a true biography.

Another, a magazine serial written in a state of pique by Carl Robinson after his dismissal by Charlie in Algiers in 1931, can be considered only as a slap on the wrist. That Robinson received a goodly sum in advance for "telling all" (he could not tell it) is not surprising, for revelational accounts of Charlie Chaplin are as rare as blue-and-white-checked nightingales laying polka-dot eggs. And Carl Robinson, never in the intimate confidence of his employer, knew him only as well as the average acquaintance could.

• Throughout eighteen years of Chaplin's twenty-five years on the screen, there has been one employee, one person who actually knows Chaplin, the man. That this employee has little understanding of the complex nature of an artist, takes nothing from the facts. That employee is "Kono," as he is

known in Hollywood, in New York, over Europe, by all who know Charlie Chaplin.

Kono, Chaplin's Japanese secretary, has seen through the years, promises broken, obligations evaded, a ruthlessness toward women, a cowardice of the practical mechanics of life all beyond his understanding. This biographer sees a man—an artist—who, with the whole courage of a sorely tried heart and unquenchable ideals, has again and again mastered a bitter fate and recaptured the essence of his life.

Helpless to combat the simple forces of practical, everyday living, Charlie Chaplin has, nonetheless, demonstrated a stupendous ability to grow upward stormily, to put down internal revolt, to produce the living form of his art controlled to a precise measure and to an austerity removed from all uncertainty.

George Moore has said, "For the true picture of a man, give me the *disrespectful* biography." This unauthorized story of Charles Chaplin is intended to be "disrespectful" only in so far as is necessary to depict the truth. It is far from the author's intention to disparage the subject; rather is it her desire to guard scrupulously the character of the artist from any implication of baseness. And it is because the man belongs not to the hour but to posterity that the writer maintains the right to embody the hitherto unknown facts of Charlie Chaplin's life within the covers of a book.

As to the sources of material which went into the preparation of this book, the reader may be assured that the writer did not depend upon idle rumor or vague gossip but obtained by legal contract, information and documents belonging to Toraichi Kono. And Chaplin, himself has described his secretary in his accounts of his travels in 1931 as follows: "Kono is my man-Friday. He is everything—nurse, valet¹, private secretary, and body-guard."

In addition to this source, public records and additional private documents have been carefully scrutinized, the latter with the owner's consent and co-operation.

In portraying the chain of events resultant of the inner urge to greatness that converted an obscure, poverty-ridden Cockney boy into one of the greatest artists of his day, the writer has made no effort to please Chaplin, nor to placate his friends; but has endeavored to reveal as much of the truth as is compatible with good taste. If the record should show that in his various amours and in his other private dealings, Mr. Chaplin has exceeded the bounds of convention, what artist has not? It will also show that he has through his own merit and his own development attained an enviable place in the artistic world. We cannot have art without artists; and their modes of life are not ours to criticize but rather is it our pleasurable

¹ Charlie employed another valet at the time.

duty to come to an understanding of such natures.

Charlie Chaplin has shown in 1939 unquestionable courage in his determination to satirize the dictators of the totalitarian states. A box advertisement appeared in the Los Angeles *Daily News* on March 20, 1939, as follows: "Owing to erroneous reports in the press that I have abandoned my production concerning dictators, I wish to state that I have never wavered from my original determination to produce this picture. . . . I am not worried about intimidation, censorship, or anything else. . . ."

Surely the writer can show no less courage than the subject of her work. She has "not wavered from (my) determination to produce this picture," is "not worried about intimidation, censorship nor anything else."



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CHARLIE CHAPLIN

KING OF
TRAGEDY



KONO: A Biographical Note

TORAICHI KONO sprang from an old and wealthy middle-class Japanese family of Hiroshima, Japan, a family substantial, and prominent in merchandising for nearly one thousand years by actual genealogical records in possession of the present generation.

There were three children born to his parents, Suki and Huyemon Kono, two sons and one daughter. Toraichi was the elder son.

Now it is the custom in Japan for the eldest son to assume, upon his father's death, the given name of his male parent. Toraichi, modern-minded, a materialist, and given to flouting the old order, was to be denied this privilege.

At fourteen, while still in junior high school in Hiroshima, young Kono gave every evidence of becoming the undutiful son who was to be cut off with the proverbial yen. He refused to train himself in self-discipline and the rigid conduct expected of him or to take seriously his future responsibilities in regard to entailed wealth.

Toraichi admired geisha girls, who were, after

all, the only girls a very young man about town in Japan *could* admire save at a discreet distance. He had a school friend, the son of a banker, who was of the same mind about the fleshpots of Hiroshima. This lad seemed always to be plentifully supplied with money, but it never occurred to young Kono to question its source; he merely considered his own father penurious in not allowing him proportionate yen to spend in the tea houses and at geisha house dancing parties which were his and his friend's constant indulgence.

Before long their indiscretions were discovered. The storm broke. The banker's son had been filching from his father's safe, and Toraichi must accept his share of the blame. Had he not enjoyed the stolen fruits? Well, then, he must pay. The two boys were asked to leave school, were made to feel pretty uncomfortable, each in his respective home, until the fathers, feeling that the ends of discipline had been served, asked that the boys be reinstated in school. This was granted, but they were transferred to another school across town.

Young Kono, having had more than a taste of gay life, had no idea of relinquishing it. By some youthful, quixotic reasoning he decided that although it had been wrong for his chum to steal *money*, it would be quite ethical and most expedient for him to filch not money, but bamboo! Among his father's various holdings was a vast bamboo farm, and bamboo, used extensively in Japan for

building, was immediately marketable. So at regular intervals, and surreptitiously, he ordered his father's field workers to cut and turn over to him enough of the tall graceful growth to keep the two of them, his friend and himself, in several hundred yen each month, sufficient funds for very young men about town.

This, too, was inevitably discovered at about the time the boys were to be graduated from junior high school. The wrath of his father knew no bounds. Terrified, young Kono hurriedly wrote a cousin in Seattle urging him to invite his father to send him to America for a year. This the cousin did, and Kono, *père*, not suspecting the ruse of his son, looked upon this letter as a direction from the spirit of one of his ancestors. Toraichi was shipped off to Seattle, where he remained and went to public school. At the end of the year he was allowed to come home for another try at obedience.

If the youth had been inclined to flout tradition before he went to America, his rebellion at authority was the greater now that he had tasted the freedom of American youth. Once he had got home, he refused to listen to his father's plans for him to enter high school, go on to college, and eventually marry the girl to whom he had been promised since he was five, the girl, three. He felt that his former social activities had seriously handicapped him for the stiff examinations he must pass to enter the upper school; he had his eyes upon a future wife

of his own choosing. His father was adamant. His son would obey his orders or——

The upshot of it was that Toraichi ran away. He got as far as Kobe on the way to the port of Yokohama and sent home for money. His father sent him one thousand yen. This was spent in five days of riotous good time, and he wired his mother for more. She sent him five hundred yen. He proceeded to get rid of all this but a hundred. Then he went to Yokohama, where he inquired the fare to Seattle. First class, he was told, was over six hundred yen; second, over four hundred; steerage, sixty-five. He took steerage passage on the *Empress of China*.

Aboard the boat he was dismayed to find that steerage passengers were expected to bring their own blankets. Only cots and mattresses were supplied. He had no blanket, nor could he wheedle one out of a steward. What to do? He looked around and discovered a likable young chap older than himself but of a class beneath him, who was going to America for the first time and who was obviously frightened at the prospect. Putting on his most worldly air, young Kono talked volubly of the strange, exciting land and its agreeable customs: talked with his mind's eye on the blankets of his new acquaintance. Soon he saw the chap was properly impressed by his volubility; in fact, he clung to Kono, who with his English could steer him through the narrows of the dread immigration or-

deal ahead. Kono promised. And, now, how about a division of blankets? This was effected, and each found himself with half enough covering to keep warm.

In his own nonchalance in embarking, Kono had neglected to learn that no alien could enter an American port by steerage unless he possessed the equivalent of at least fifty dollars. He had, after having had food sent down from the first-class kitchen for himself on the voyage, exactly seventy-five cents left. His new acquaintance had barely the sum required for his own entrance. This required some ingenuity. He had no wish to be sent back steerage and blanketless to an irate father. He decided to try at bluffing through.

Luck was with him, for upon disembarking at Seattle he caught sight of a man he had once seen in his father's office in Hiroshima who seemed to be acting as interpreter. Catching his eye, young Kono winked at him and in a rapid fire of Japanese gave him an inkling of his plight. The interpreter in turn gave the immigration officials a glowing account of the respectability of the Kono family and added that the poor boy had started out with much money but had lost it on shipboard. His father would send him more immediately. Kono was passed. His protégé, who had had nothing to fear all along, had he known it, was admitted without challenge.

Young Kono went directly from the boat to the

Furuye Company, Importers, in Seattle, using his seventy-five cents for the trip into town. The manager of the firm looked him over skeptically, seeing before him a boy in short trousers. He demanded to know why Toraichi was so far from home and why he needed a job. Toraichi told him the whole story. Hiding a smile, the manager agreed to give him a job but secretly he determined to make the work so arduous and menial that the boy would sicken of his "freedom" and be glad to go home. He informed the youth that his work would be opening the store every morning, sweeping the large rooms thoroughly before he went to school; after school he could work as apprentice salesman and errand boy until nine o'clock at night, when he could assist in covering stock and closing up for the night. Kono was a bit dismayed at the remuneration he was to receive for this—only his board and lodging—but he accepted the conditions, not, however, without a wistful backward glance at his former good times.

Many times during the year that ensued he was to reflect ruefully upon the price of freedom but when he remembered that had he stayed at home he would have lost face in his examinations and would have had to marry, eventually, the girl of his father's choice, he was somewhat reconciled. He would stay long enough, he decided, for his father to realize the prize he had lost.

At the end of his year's work, the Furuye Com-

pany, better than their word, gave him two new suits of clothes as bonus, one with long trousers, the other with short, a sort of compromise between the comical maturity of the boy and his actual youth. He was fifteen and small for his age.

Young Kono felt by this time that a mercantile life was not for him. He applied for a job as houseboy in a family and got it. This also left him time to go to school and gave him wages of one and one-half dollars each week. He knew as little about housework as he had known about business, but his duties were simple. He was to get up early, build a fire in the kitchen range, and take the family parrot for a stroll in the garden on fine days. He soon mastered the fire, but the bird and its new nurse took an instant and hearty dislike to one another. At the very sight of his enemy the parrot would open its mouth and emit a raucous screech. Kono did not screech back but he returned the feeling with interest. However, he swallowed his antipathy as best he could and, every morning, feeling a bit ridiculous, he walked about the kitchen garden with the bird strutting grumblingly at his heels.

All went well for several weeks until one rainy morning when Kono released Polly from her cage and allowed her to take her morning constitutional about the kitchen. The parrot proceeded to show lack of respect for the floor freshly mopped the night before, and for her guardian who had mopped

it. Kono raised his foot to give Polly a long-looked-forward-to kick when his mistress walked into the room! Highly indignant, she berated Kono for a heartless brute. She had suspected all along, she told him darkly, a good reason for Polly's not liking him. He probably kicked her every morning. Poor dear Polly! Kono was fired on the spot.

Another house job without parrot or other untoward incident completed his school year. He decided to return to Japan and apprised his mother of that decision. She sent him the money for first-cabin passage.

It was 1905, and Toraichi was seventeen.

Kono's father had given him up as a bad job, was concentrating upon his younger brother to carry on his name and businesses. Toraichi looked about for something to do.

Bicycles were the luxury vehicles of Japan at the time. Automobiles were as yet unreliable conveyances and owned by millionaires as playthings; jinrikishas were the carriages of business; bicycles the desire of every young sportsman. Toraichi and his old school friend wished to go into the bicycle business. Their fathers agreed.

Each boy was given two thousand yen. They set up shop. At the end of the first year the young merchants divided a net profit of twenty-one thousand yen. This was too easy; they decided to quit the bicycle business and do something more startling. They would inaugurate a bus line through

the villages between Hiroshima and Kobe. They bought a sixteen-passenger Winton motorbus.

Now the inhabitants of rural Japan had never seen, at the time, a motorcar, to say nothing of having ridden in one. Word was bruited about that the devil wagon was to run; the day was declared a holiday by all and sundry in surrounding towns. Lunches were brought to the scene and a gala time anticipated.

Alas, the youthful promoters had reckoned without Big Business—the jinrikisha corporations. The latter would not sit idly by and allow this outlandish encroachment upon their territory. They ordered runners out to see that the bus did *not* run. It was to appear an accident. This plot, worthy of Chicago at its best form, the runners entered into with such enthusiasm that the huge car was ditched into several feet of soft mud, where it remained bogged down to the delight of the populace until the two partners could wangle machinery from Kobe to hoist it and move it to Hiroshima. Kono promptly sold out his interest to some hardier soul for eight thousand yen.

With a business career behind him, at eighteen, he now felt that it was time to retire and see more of the world. But his father, secretly delighted at the recent fiasco of the bus venture, returned to the fray. He was prepared to force the marriage contract between his son and the girl, made years before. Toraichi must come into the family business

and prove himself superior to his younger brother in responsibility.

Toraichi refused on all counts. This defiance enraged his father, who called his recalcitrant son into his office and demanded that he sign papers relinquishing all rights to his father's given name, also his inheritance. Toraichi was given one thousand yen.

In complete disgrace, according to Japanese standards, Kono left for America to attend engineering school in preparation for aviation, the natural progression in ambition for modern speed. He sent for his fiancée, and they were married in Seattle before setting off for California, which was at the time the mecca for Japanese in America.

Kono enrolled in the Hub Wilson school for aviation in Venice, a seaside suburb of Los Angeles.

A son was born to the Konos, and Mrs. Kono, modern-minded in her ideas of a wife's rights, demanded that Kono give up all plans for flying. It was too risky for a husband and father. Kono, a bit in awe of this departure from a Japanese wife's customary meekness, acquiesced to her demand. He consulted a friend who was in the consulate and who advised him to learn to drive a car if he did not wish to start in the vegetable gardens as the majority of Japanese in California did.

Another friend told him that the sensational new picture star, Charlie Chaplin, was in need of a chauffeur. Kono applied for the job and got it.

The Road Begins

IT IS A BLEAK, late afternoon in England in the year 1894. A young woman is hurrying across the downs beyond the last fringe of London, out Highgate way. With her are two boys, the elder striding manfully along as befits his nine years; the younger, a boy of five, shy, delicate, and wrapped in the secret torture of his own thoughts, struggling to keep up with the longer steps of his mother and brother, dread of their destination further weighting his small feet. His is a child's face bereft of youthfulness, without any of the heedless gaiety of the usual child of five.

He looks back now as if trying to catch a comforting glimpse of the wretched huddle of buildings of the Kennington slums whence they have just come. But they are quite hidden; he sees only the vast expanse of rolling downs, the hills beyond beautiful in their grim contours—and hates them.

Rain has come with the west wind. The hills are drawn back behind thick sheets of glassy rain; the drops of rain scud swiftly along the yellowing grass before the wind. The young woman stops and

makes a futile attempt to gather more closely about him the smaller lad's scant coat. She urges both boys to a quicker pace.

At last there looms before them a building, a huge grey pile, its Ionic columns crazily distorted through the sheet glass of the rain. It is their destination, the Orphanage of S——, or the "work'us" school. The mother pulls the bell. The smaller boy shrinks back behind her. An attendant peers out, opens the door. They enter, Hannah Chaplin and her two sons, Sydney and Charles.

There is a hurried explanation of their errand by the mother. She kisses both boys and scurries away out into the rain, as if to cut short the agony of shame which engulfs her. Hannah Chaplin has lost, temporarily, her battle with the grim, uncompromising poverty of the London slums.

The small Charles gazes at the doorway through which his mother has disappeared. He does not look to his older brother for comfort nor does he see the master who has come to induct them into the charity home. Even in that moment when all of his attention seems to be fixed upon the awful fact of separation from his mother, we have the impression that with his thoughts, his dreams, he is far away and alone with them. He stands motionless, aloof, engrossed in his own dark world and unaware of any other; on his delicately wrought face, the lines of acute suffering which has nothing to do with the happenings about him; in his great

dark blue eyes, the melancholy of his inner world.

Curiously discomfited by some quality in the smaller lad, nameless and beyond his ken, the master stares at the boy before him, who will not fit nicely, he senses, into the mold of "this is done," and "this *isn't* done." He sees a taciturn little boy with a broad, high, splendidly arched brow beneath a shock of unruly, almost black hair; large deep-set blue eyes, at once questioning and rebellious; a finely modeled straight nose and long chin, the latter indicative of indefatigable energy. And the mouth, the lips folded back over prominent frontal teeth, the corners sensitive and mobile. The whole modeling of the head and face on the undersized, frail body is *old* and self-reliant—a challenge to standardization, the accustomed order.

The master bears the two boys away for registration but not before he has, like all his ilk, marked the strangeling who does not respond to his patronizing cheerfulness, for future especial discipline.

Hannah Chaplin had been a singer and dancer in London under the stage name of Lily Harley when she married Sydney Hawkes, a Jewish bookmaker. Of this marriage there was one son, Sydney Hawkes, Junior, who was to be known later in Hollywood as "Syd Chaplin." She divorced Hawkes. There followed an alliance with one Wheeler Dryden (no record of marriage could be

found), a vague and shadowy figure in the annals of the family. Another son, Wheeler, Junior, came of this union. A separation followed, the small Wheeler being relegated to his father for support. Again Hannah took to the music halls, and it was there she met Charles Spencer Chaplin, a handsome, debonair singer and cellist. They were married in 1888. Charles Spencer Chaplin, Junior, was born April 16, 1889.

Chaplin, Senior, had earned them—his wife and son and stepson—an existence of sorts until shortly before his death, when ill-health and a recognition of falling short of his high hopes in music had sent him to the neighborhood “pub” for a certain forgetfulness. Hannah had accepted this uncomplainingly; she truly loved her gentle, music-loving husband. She set to work to piece out their meager needs by home dressmaking.

When Charlie was three, he stood with his mother in a little park across from the great City Hospital. His somber eyes searched her face for the meaning of her gaze as she stared at the lighted window of the room across and above in which his father, she told him, had just died. Too young to grasp the finality of death, he was capable only of a mute recognition of the suffering pictured in his mother’s face, her mien. Unable to understand the fear mingled with that grief, fear of the actual want that hovered, always, over the mean streets and unsavory alleys of Kennington where he was



BY COURTESY OF H. T. REED, PHOTOGRAPHER, LONDON

Charles Spencer Chaplin, Sr. The only photograph extant of Charlie's father.

born and where they lived, he was a little embarrassed at her unwonted display of emotion as she sank down upon a bench in the park and gave way to her sorrow and despair. The small boy could only make a show of playing about on the grass until he heard her sobs stilled. He followed her look to the window above. The light was out.

He took her hand, and together they went back to the cheerless little house in Chester Street, their home. ✕

Touched by this first somber tragedy of his life, Charles Chaplin showed signs at three of the atavistic essence of the ancestry which had selected him to gather up into his being all the reflections of passions, the sensibility, the love, the capacity for suffering which was to become the spring and source of his genius as a melancholy wit. He even acted out for his half-brother, Sydney, the event of the evening to such success that Sydney howled with grief mixed with hysterical laughter. ✕

Sydney threw off, as a normal child does, the death of the only father he had known. He obeyed the truism, "Time heals all." Charlie stored it away in his consciousness as a never-to-be-forgotten reminder of death and the pity of love.

Installed at the Orphanage of S——, there followed for the sensitive Charlie, with his impassivity of countenance, who was cursed—or blessed—with a capacity for feeling far in excess of that of his fellows, two years of acute unhappiness

within the rigorous confines of a "charitable" institution.

Institutions for the poor in England, as late as that time, had not rid themselves entirely of the cruelty, both mental and physical, so vividly pictured by Charles Dickens a few decades before. Discipline almost military, and not a little sadistic, was administered to the small derelicts washed up by the tides of ill fortune upon the shores of the state. With fine disregard for child psychology of which they could know nothing; with like disregard for the simple precepts of human kindness to the merely unfortunate, the schools as a whole hewed to the line of rules made for all alike. The masters, apparently, were chosen for the quality of sternness rather than for a natural understanding of the child mind and heart.

Charlie's first Christmas at the orphanage is revealing. Huddled in the draughty hall outside the dining room, the children try vainly to warm themselves over the inadequate heaters. More warming are the thoughts of the Christmas joy to come. Each child is to be given a bag of sweets and an orange; of all things, an orange.

Charlie, on tiptoes, peeks over the heads of the taller boys. He has seen oranges but never in his short life has he tasted one. Sure enough, there they are! A bright splash of color against the prisonlike grey of the room. He is warned soberly by a boy standing near that an orange comes only

once a year. He speculates upon the manner of drawing the supreme pleasure from the glorious treat. He will, he tells himself defiantly, eat the whole orange at one time but—he will save the peel! This can be nibbled away at for days and days to follow, bringing back the memory of the luscious fruit. The sweets, he admonishes himself sternly, will be hoarded and apportioned to himself by himself—one every day. He can scarcely contain his rapture, is quivering with joyous excitement.

Finally the gong is sounded. The boys crowd toward the door, a jubilant, noisy throng. They march in. Each child as he passes the master at the door is handed his treat. But not Charlie! He reaches for his orange and sweets; the master puts him aside. "Oh, no," he tells the boy, and Charlie fancies now that he saw a look of unholy joy upon the face of the man. "You'll go without for what you did yesterday." He referred to some minor infraction of a house rule, by a boy of five.

There is little doubt that his experience in such a place with, at best, its atmosphere of gloom and implied reproach for being there at all, its stern discouragement of laughter and joy, had a lasting effect upon the shy, sensitive Charlie. He could not rid himself of the implication of imprisonment, disgrace, for many years. Poverty was indelibly stamped upon his mind as the contributory reason for his being there at all. The experience was at

one and the same time the root of his later penuriousness and the source of his tragic laughter and the purging melancholy of his wit.

That this interlude, and her subsequent struggles to provide food and shelter for them, had its effect upon their mother, is proved by the tragedy of her later years. Hannah Chaplin was to live to see her son the screen idol of millions, to be surrounded by every material comfort that money could buy, but she would not be able to take in the true import of her son's greatness or her own good fortune. Her mind already fogged by a mild insanity when she was fetched by Tom Harrington to California in the early nineteen-twenties, installed in a comfortable cottage in Hollywood, and tended by nurses and servants, she grew steadily worse until her death in the Glendale Sanitarium in August, 1928.

Hannah Chaplin, though of immediate Cockney origin, was not of pure Anglo-Saxon lineage. She was blonde, of the coloring of northern Spain, whence her forbears came.

Charlie's father, whose origin was surely French, was less English than his wife. *Capeline*, from which the name Chaplin is derived, can be traced back to the horde of French-Norman invaders and conquerors of the Saxons. The name denotes "mailed hood." There is the implication of aristocratic blood in his father's name.

The alchemy of birth and proof of environment

are enigmatic now as always. But reaching back four or five generations, both his mother and his father seem to have given Charlie features curiously Latin, as well as a mastery of the Latin style in his art. In studying the French portrait painters whose conceptions hang on the walls of the smaller rooms of the Louvre, Henry III, Francis I; from Jean de Paris down to Clouet, it is not hard to discern a procession of such faces as Charlie Chaplin's. Subtle, ironic, both sensual and sentimental; at once acute and unheeding—a sardonic wit over all.

There is no premise for the popular belief that Charlie Chaplin has Jewish blood.

He inherited the gift of mimicry from his mother. Throughout her life she retained her sense of the dramatic in the simple everyday acts of people about her. "I often wonder if I should ever have made a success of pantomime," he has said, "if it had not been for my mother's driving its value into my consciousness." As a small boy he would watch her, fascinated, for hours, as she sat at a window, gazing at people in the street and reproducing to his intense delight, with her hands, her facial expressions, all that occurred. Observing her, he learned the possibility of translating simple actions into significant meaning.

One morning when she was at her favorite diversion, she saw a neighbor come down the street. "There goes Bill Smith," she told her small son.

"He's dragging his feet, and his boots aren't clean. He is angry. His walk is dejected. I'll wager he's had a row with his wife and come away without his breakfast. Look, he must have! He's turning into the baker's for a roll." Sure enough, in the course of the day, it would become general neighborhood knowledge that Bill Smith and his wife *had* had a row. And, more important to the embryonic and atavistic young future mimer, he was able to grasp that this interest on the part of his mother had significance beyond the idle curiosity of neighborhood gossip, that it was an outlet for her own frustrated ambitions for the stage.

Mentally and physically ill-nourished, too poorly clad to go regularly to school, Charlie and his brothers found most of their early education as well as their amusements in the back streets of London. Their infrequent baths were had, in summer, from an old wooden tub outside a livery stable near their home. The tub is still there. What were Charlie Chaplin's thoughts when he retraced his steps over the scenes of his boyhood in 1921? Well-clad, from luxurious living quarters, the world at his feet, he stood before the old tub and caught the nostalgic flavor of the days of hunger and misery so long ago.

The average man who has attained worldly success uses each remembered privation of his earlier struggle to savor more completely the happier circumstances materially of his present life. Charlie

Chaplin appreciates the *freedom* his wealth gives him, the right to eat when he pleases, to come and go as he will. And there the analogy ends.

The sordidness of his surroundings penetrated the senses of the boy, Charlie, to another contradictory degree. He was never to feel the longing of the average Londoner brought up in city squalor for the English countryside and its natural beauty. His one conscious urge was to escape the ugliness and fetters of poverty. His deeper and unconscious urge was to express himself. That he was marked by a curious insensitiveness to the beauty of the countryside has had nothing to do with his art. He became the sculptor who works in a garret from living subjects; in the way that François Villon was the poet, he modeled his own body, his own features, from their impassivity into the living picture of the melancholy and the ironic wit of the world. And all the while there lay in his eyes the somber tragedy of yet unfathomed life.

Even as the young Shakespeare had held the heads of horses for the theatergoers of London long before him, young Chaplin earned a few pence each evening by opening carriage doors of the personages who drove up to these same theaters. Bringing his instinct of mimicry into play, he would send the other boys into hilarious, if stifled, laughter at his imitations of the pompous figures entering the lobby. There was no one quite like young Chaplin, they agreed, but they could not

guess that the half-starved lad's mimicry, even then, contained the seeds of his later perfection in pantomime.

The themes of pantomime are as limited as those of the great tragedies of the world. Agamemnon and Electra, worked on for upwards of three thousands of years by our greatest poets, remain the fundamental tragedies that they are: pantomime works away on the simple themes of its imagery to remain the true portrayals of the foibles of external worth. The tragicomedy of the singer who gets ready to sing but never does; the dignified drunk who is so pathetically desirous of proving that he is *not* drunk; the wistful spawn of poverty who looks at the rich or great with a sardonic clarity of perception that strips them of their accoutrements and shows them as they actually *are*: all these are the themes of imagery reduced to its fundamentals—pantomime.

When time came for young Charles Chaplin to go into steady employment, there were no funds and little inclination upon the part of his mother to apprentice him to a trade which would meet the demands of his station—cobbling, barbering, or the like. For a short time, however, driven by the immediate necessity of eating and the stark want of his family, he did serve as lather boy in a neighborhood barbership. But the urge to act was deep within him and the work of lathering men's faces was hateful to him who, by his gift of genius, saw

so clearly into their minds and hearts. He must, he felt, somehow escape. But how? There were no influential friends, no patron to aid him in that first essential step above the level to which he was, apparently, condemned.

It was only natural that he should turn, while yet a child, to the music hall, the cheapest and most poorly paid form of the theater but the only avenue at all accessible.

By sheer persistence he won a try-out with a group of juvenile dancers known as the *Eight Lancashire Lads*. Blindly at first and with no other thoughts than the escape from apprenticeship to trade and the few pence he could bring home to his mother, Charlie worked long hours in the hall and longer ones at home, practicing for the perfection which marked him from the beginning. He was eight years old.

Years later in *Sunnyside*, one of his earlier films, he can be seen dancing with the light grace of a faun; this was learned from his mother in an unheated house in the cold of a London winter by a boy of eight who tired easily because of insufficient food.

Within four years the seriousness with which he approached his work and his tireless perseverance for perfection of detail were recognized. This recognition proved to be one of those happy accidents which give managers the reputation for having a certain flair in discerning talent.

At the Duke of York's Theater in St. Martin's Lane, Charles Frohman presented *Clarice*, a comedy starring William Gillette, who was supported by such memorable names in the theater as Lucille La Verne, Adelaide Prince, Marie Doro, and Thomas H. Burns. The premiere performance was dated October 17, 1905, and the programme was of heavy white satin, heavily fringed with gold.

Preceding the play at eight-thirty was a piece, *The Painful Predicament of Sherlock Holmes*, with the cast of William Gillette, Irene Vanbrugh, and the new find, Master Charles Chaplin. The part of Billy the page boy gave young Chaplin full scope for portraying a crafty young rascal who understands his master perfectly and accords him a sort of critical devotion. He was a natural for the Cockney role.

It soon came about that theater lovers were going again and again to St. Martin's Lane and were in their seats well before time for the curtain on the opening skit. As for Charlie, for the first time he won bursts of spontaneous applause and ripples of anticipatory laughter each time *he*, not seven other dancers and himself, appeared on the stage. It was sweet to his ears, and this approbation did much to build up his confidence in himself. But at the same time he strove for more minute perfection of "business" to drain the last drop of artistry from the slender part. The volume of

applause grew commensurately with his efforts. He was a success! He was gloriously happy!

Charlie was but thirteen when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes books, dropped in one day at rehearsal. He singled out for a bit of chaffing the youngster who stood out with such clarity as the page boy. In the course of the conversation, Charlie, with gamin insouciance, astounded the writer with the suggestion that they, Sir Arthur and he, enter into an agreement on the spot to divide equally their incomes for the rest of their lives. (Charlie was getting two pounds a week.) Sir Arthur burst into delighted guffaws as he declined the ridiculous offer. But his laughter, no doubt, turned a little sour in later years when he ruminated upon half the income from fifteen millions of dollars which the former page boy was enjoying. It is interesting to indulge in conjecture as to the probable effect of this quixotic proposal upon Charlie's career as an artist.

Though he was not yet fourteen when the run of *Sherlock Holmes* ended, we see the forerunner of the originality which must create its own peculiar outlet and the melancholy, sardonic humor of which he was to become master in later years.

Small wonder that Charlie Chaplin has held fast to his faith in the art of pantomime. He became a member of a variety company that, after a certain success in the cheaper halls of London, was to tour the Channel Islands. The members of the troupe,

all impressionable youths in their teens had high notions of bringing their London sophistication to the benighted Islanders.

What was their surprise and humiliation, therefore, to find in their first Island performance that their acts fell quite flat; their witty sallies, couched in Cockney slang, were met with stolid indifference and never a smile.

Charlie's spirits sank with the rest of the boys', but unlike the others who chafed to get back to London, where their colloquial catch phrases and jokes elicited noisy appreciation from a Cockney audience, he must dig into the cause of this unresponsiveness. He found it—purely a matter of language! The Islanders who spote a *patois*, a curious mixture of French and English, simply had not understood a word of the dialogue of the acts! Charlie assumed leadership and called a meeting in their dressing room. He explained to the restless, uninterested cast that if words were useless, they would use gestures.

All that day he sweated and struggled with the boys who were, after all, only boys; they could not see that their mentor, who was actually younger than most of them, was "as old as a thousand yesterdays." He did not falter. Here was something he could *create*.

He dug back into his memory for his mother's interpretation of emotion by gesture; he called into play a sort of slithering walk he had learned from

an old cabby in Kennington Road. The old fellow had had bad feet, wore boots of enormous size, and slipped along in the street in a painful manner ludicrous to the cruel sense of humor of youth. Straight through the acts, he substituted pantomime for the spoken word, throwing himself into his creations with fervor until the others caught his enthusiasm and followed suit. Their tour of the Channel Islands was an unqualified success.

So, by accident, by determination and keen perception, by creative instinct, or what you will, this callow and inexperienced youth of the music halls had hit upon the oldest art of expression, the pantomime. And Charlie Chaplin's pictures, today, are primarily an appeal to the simplest of human emotions, which after all may be the basis for their greatness. In each country of the entire civilized and half-civilized world, they speak the language which the natives of these countries can understand. The lift of an eyebrow, the hitch of a shoulder, the outward fling of hands, perhaps most of all the remarkable flexibility of facial expressions, can say with no words more than the speaking actor can convey through reels of dialogue. The interpretation of this pantomime is a challenge to sophisticated audiences. They must bring their own lines to the theater.

Returning to London, Charlie felt that his profession was definitely chosen. All half-hearted intent on the part of his mother to seek some means

of apprenticing him to a trade was forgotten. What more natural than that Charlie should succeed in the work of the theater? His father had been, in his youth, a prime favorite with music-hall audiences; she herself had enjoyed her brief career in the sun.

Charlie threw himself wholeheartedly into the business of provoking laughter. Applause was music to his ears. The color and a certain glamor of the music halls crept into his veins. He loved the theater. The money he earned, though pitifully little, was lessening the cramped poverty of the whole family.

He eventually obtained booking with the Fred Karno Comedy Company and, before he was eighteen, had taken rooms with his mother and brothers in Glenshore Mansions, in Brixton Road, a more prosperous neighborhood and more respectable than that of Chester Street in Kennington. Of his new quarters, he said, "Glenshore Mansions was a step up for me. I had my Turkish carpet and my red lights. It was the beginning of my prosperity."

All credit must be given to the weedy, half-nourished youth who had achieved his "Turkish carpet." The streets and a cheerless hovel had been his school of dramatic art; the passers-by had afforded the only models of his mimicry.

Young Love

IN 1908, when Charlie was nineteen and playing the halls of suburban London as a "vaudeville sketch artist," as they were termed in that day, there began for him the one real and idealistic romance of his life.

Perhaps it was because of his socially starved existence that the episode took on more than the usual significance of such first, or "puppy" loves. Perhaps it was because the object of this first romantic desire became to him the symbol of the unattainable which is, many times, the fixation of a mind carrying the weight of genius.

At any rate, Charlie, with the other members of his act, was standing in the wings of the theater one night, awaiting his turn to go on. A troupe of girls was dancing on the stage. One of them slipped, almost fell; the rest smiled, appearing to take the audience into their confidence to cover the break in the rhythm of the number. One girl, dark and graceful and slender, with laughing brown eyes, glancing into the wings, caught Charlie's eyes and smiled at him.

It seemed to the lonely youth that there was an especial significance to that smile. He was suddenly enthralled, lifted up from the actual cheapness of his surroundings. His exaltation must have shown in his face, for the girl, flushing with embarrassment, turned her glance quickly away.

When she came off the stage, however, before she ran back for the finale of their act, she threw her wrap to Charlie, asking him rather breathlessly, to take care of it until her return. Charlie could not believe that it was *he* who had been singled out for this honor. He stammered his willingness to mind the cloak. When he was sure there was no one looking, he buried his face in the lavender-scented garment which had so recently enfolded this heavenly creature.

When she came to reclaim her cloak, the girl thanked him provocatively, but Charlie was speechless. They stood and smiled at each other, the girl waiting for him to grasp the opportunity for further acquaintance, Charlie too timid to do more than grin inanely.

The manager of the girls' troupe hurried them away to another theater in a near-by suburb where they were to go on immediately. Charlie, seeing in her departure an act of finality, came to life, and sprang to open the door for her. "See you tomorrow night," she said to him shyly. Charlie could only nod wordlessly. "Don't forget," she flung over her shoulder more boldly, now that she was disappear-

ing through the doorway. Charlie found words at last. "I won't forget," he repeated soberly.

Leaving the theater for his rooms in Glenshore Mansions, he trod on clouds; all his life, he was sure he would remember her look, her smile, the shy words, and the scent of lavender that clung to her clothes.

For weeks there was no meeting with Hetty Kelly (he learned her name from others of the troupe) other than the few passing moments in the theater each evening. He had learned that she lived with her mother and brother and another sister. He wanted desperately to ask her to go—somewhere—with him. At long last he screwed his courage to the sticking point; he did not fail. She agreed to meet him at Kennington Gate on the next Sunday afternoon. Her ready acceptance of his invitation sent him into a flurry of mixed emotions, contempt for his cowardice of the past weeks and a new fear that he would not please her on further acquaintance.

The appointment was for four o'clock; Charlie was at the gate well before the time. He was dressed in the height of theatrical fashion of the time—double-breasted coat pinched in at the waist, bowler hat, stick, and yellow gloves. He rattled thirty shillings in his pocket.

As he waited, he became the prey of vague apprehensions about the girl. What would she look like in the daylight without makeup? Would he

even be able to recognize her? People looked different off stage. Was she really as beautiful, as ethereal as she had seemed in the glamor of lights and makeup? He discovered to his dismay that he could not even actualize her features. His impression was a mist of scent and laughing brown eyes and—personality. That must be it.

On the alert, despite these fearful musings, he saw a young woman approaching. She was the size, the build of Hetty, he was sure. She came nearer. His heart sank. There were the brown eyes and the dark hair, but the girl was homely, without a trace of the beauty he had visualized. He squared his shoulders. The incident must be met and got through somehow; the girl must never suspect his disillusionment. He looked up, saw her looking at him, prepared to smile, and—after a brief, incurious glance—she walked on.

The suspense, beginning again, seemed to last hours, but in reality it was only a few minutes until a tram approached and stopped. Among the passengers alighting Charlie was overjoyed to recognize one, a radiantly beautiful creature in a neatly tailored navy-blue suit. It was Hetty. She was far more lovely in the harsh light of the blustery afternoon than she had been in the half-light of the theater.

That night after seeing her home Charlie's heart was bursting with the emotion of a dreamer of dreams. Hetty liked him! He wanted to run along

the Thames embankment and shout his happiness to the world. He looked about him and found an outlet for his exuberance—the derelicts hanging wistfully about the coffee stall across from the great quiet buildings that were sleeping by the river. The hungry-eyed down-and-outers obviously did not have the price of the steaming coffee or tea which sent their aromas out into the dank, chill night. He called them about him and ordered the vender to hand out hot drinks and buns until the nineteen shillings remaining from his evening with Hetty were exhausted, and all the money he would have for a week was spent.

Perhaps Charlie's love for Hetty was for her but an episode, a not unusual incident; but to Charlie, the recent waif of the streets, the youth starved for tangible beauty, it was as if he had never been wholly alive until now. His exuberance probably wearied her, for she was too young to understand that she was the vessel for the outpouring of all his lonely years. She was too inexperienced to feel the adoration underlying his clumsy attempts to show her that she was a goddess and he her slave. Young girls are apt to grow impatient with slaves and slavish worship; they are more often flattered by older men, suave men of the world. Hetty tired of Charlie.

The youth suffered all the pangs, real and imaginary, of unrequited love. Hetty left for the Continent with her troupe. They did not see one

another again for two years. But never for a moment did the delicious agony of his passion for her abate.

Crossing Piccadilly Circus one day, about two years after Hetty had left London, Charlie was aware of the insistent screech of an automobile horn. He looked to see who was in the path of a car. No one. He glanced at the car, a long, shining town car with liveried chauffeur and footman on the box. Certain that the horn was not meant to attract his attention, he passed on. As he did so, he caught a glimpse of a small gloved hand waving to him from the window. A well-known voice called, "Charlie!" It was Hetty!

Dazed over this evidence of wealth and bitterly certain that the worst had happened, he reluctantly got into the car at her insistence. As they drove through the streets toward the suburbs in which her mother lived, she laughingly explained her luxury to the grimly suffering Charlie. Her sister, she told him, had married an American millionaire. That was all. Charlie, released from his fears, was buoyantly happy that his Hetty was still the creature of his dreams, even though there persisted the disturbing thought that the glitter with which she was surrounded served only to push them more hopelessly apart.

"Now, tell me about yourself," she commanded, looking at him with affection.

"There is very little to tell," he replied. "I am

still at the same old grind, trying to be funny. I think I shall try my luck in America soon."

"Then, I shall see you there," was Hetty's prompt rejoinder. "I'm going to New York with my sister and her husband."

Charlie fancied he saw an eagerness in her manner. Perhaps—but then she had tired of him, he remembered, and sank into gloom. He roused himself, assumed a cynical air. "I'll have my secretary fix that up," he said, and laughed to hide his own effrontery.

"But, Charlie, I mean it," Hetty insisted, apparently hurt by his ironical tone. "You know I've thought of you a great deal since the good old days."

(It struck neither of them as absurd, this reference to the dim past of two years ago. They were both very young.)

Charlie was lifted again into the ecstasy of hope. She had really missed him. Someday—perhaps. . . . He must restrain himself.

He spent the evening with the Kellys—Hetty, her mother, and her brother, Arthur Kelly, known to his intimates as "Sonny." None of them could guess, that evening, that Charlie was to become the sensational impetus to motion pictures or that Sonny would come to Hollywood to work for Charlie, become foreign manager for United Artists in Europe, and eventually vice-president of the wealthy corporation organized by the ineffectual,

shy-appearing youth who sat now before their fire, inarticulate and ill at ease.

Hetty and Charlie said good-by once more. She was to return to Paris the next day. She promised to write, but after a desultory exchange of letters the correspondence died.

Charlie left for America with the Fred Karno Company. Soon after his arrival he read of Hetty's being in New York; she was staying with her sister and new brother-in-law in the house in Fifth Avenue opened up for their residence in America. He wanted terribly to telephone her or send her a note but was overcome with shyness. After all he was only a vaudeville "artist," while she, with her sister's marriage for background, was thrown with the most eligible men of Manhattan and of Long Island.

Many nights after he had finished his stint at the theater, he walked up and down, back and forth, before the imposing town house, never quite able to summon the courage to ring the bell and ask for Hetty. Finally *A Night in a London Music Hall*, his act, left for the road, and, at least, the torture of his indecision was brought to a stop. He tried to put all thought of her away.

There followed then, within three years, Charlie's miraculous rise to motion-picture fame. He arrived in New York to sign the first and noteworthy "million dollar contract." Now, he thought, I can meet Hetty on her own ground, on an equal

footing. I will look her up and can offer her the things she should have.

All very well for this decision made in his hotel rooms; diffidence and indecision had their way. He was unable to bring himself to the point of seeking her out.

Because of his sudden and spectacular fame, it had been necessary to register himself incognito at his hotel as a protection against a constant stream of interviewers from the newspapers and motion-picture magazines. Most of the days when avid young men and young women were scurrying madly about in pursuit of the elusive star in order to give to a gasping public the momentous news as to whether or not he liked cabbage and purple ties, Charlie might have been found, had anyone looked, sitting in a taxi, across the street from the house in Fifth Avenue. He hoped to meet Hetty and at the same time, have the meeting "accidental."

At last his patience was rewarded to a degree. For, not Hetty, but Sonny, one evening about six, came out of the front door and through the grilled gate to the street. Telling his driver to give him a few steps, then overtake him, Charlie hailed Sonny "by accident." Sonny was genuinely glad to see him, invited him to dinner at a restaurant.

Throughout the first courses, the name of Hetty was studiously avoided by them both, Charlie because he wished to appear indifferent, Sonny for the reason that he knew Charlie's feeling for his

sister. Over their coffee, Charlie could stand it no longer. Assuming a grand indifference, he asked casually, "By the way, how is your sister? Hetty, I mean."

Sonny, as if glad to have it over, drew a long breath. "She is quite well. Of course you knew that she was married, and living in England?"

The blow that Charlie had dreaded for years had fallen. Hetty was married. The shock was none the less sharp for its having been half-expected all along. Somehow, he got through the remainder of his visit with Sonny. He rushed to his hotel, threw his things into his bags, and left on the first train for Hollywood. His sensational triumph over poverty and obscurity had lost its meaning for him. Hetty would not share it.

Every day of the year that ensued, Charlie examined the envelope of each of the hundreds of letters that came to him daily searching for the peculiar "e," the outstanding characteristic of Hetty's writing. One day he found it. With trembling fingers he opened the letter. Sure enough the signature was "Hetty" with "Mrs. ——" in brackets.

Hopelessness seized him anew, and it was quickly turned into futile regret, and contempt, once more for his cowardice. "I have thought of you so often, dear Charlie, but never had the courage to write. And you? Perhaps it was that you did not care to see me again. . . ." The irony of it! *She*

had been waiting for *him* to take the initiative, and he, because of his miserable inferiority complex, had let slip without an aggressive move the one thing he wanted most in life. Hetty was not happy, he was sure. Though she did not say as much, everything in the letter signified dissatisfaction with her marriage, to the highly imaginative Charlie. "When you come to London," the letter went on, "as you will, one day, look me up."

Though he would not admit it to his associates, hardly to himself, and though he had been married and divorced, seeing Hetty was the underlying motive of his visit to London in 1922—the first time since he had left it in 1911. All the way across the Atlantic as he walked interminable miles around the deck, his arguments with himself convinced him, almost, that Hetty *was* happily married, that her letters had been just kind, friendly. He tried desperately to prepare himself for another in the series of disappointments which seemed inevitable in his clinging to the ephemeral dream of happiness with Hetty. And then, he argued with himself, he had grown up, matured; he had become an international celebrity. Women were throwing themselves at his head. Why, he could have his choice of a hundred beauties for a wife. He didn't want them; he wanted Hetty. But she was married, perhaps happily married. Still, running through the cool philosophical reasoning, there persisted the words from Hetty's letter, "I

have so often thought of you, dear Charlie," which set his heart pounding and his imagination aflame.

At Southhampton, his port of disembarkation in England, the welcome to Charlie was noisy and exciting; never had such crowds assembled to welcome anyone, save England's royalty, as greeted Charlie at the port and all along the way to London. Hundreds of letters and telegrams were handed him, thousands of people broke through the police cordons in a hysterical mass, attempting frantically to see him, speak to him, touch him. In the melee he felt a firm hand upon his arm and found himself in a railway carriage on his way to London. He turned, curious as to who had been so dexterous; it was Sonny Kelly. Sonny talking nervously about the excitement of being a world celebrity, of the crowds lining the streets in London on the route from the station to the hotel. All this while Charlie sat preoccupied, trying to savor the thrill beforehand of seeing Hetty once more. Sternly he reminded himself that he must be a man of the world, that he was no supplicating vaudeville artist now; he was a success. He would be natural and disarming. He had learned that, once one is a famous personage, one can afford to be his simple self.

He jerked his thoughts back to the present, to Sonny, who was, now, he noticed, wearing an air of strain, sadness. Something was wrong. He ventured to ask, "Is Hetty in town?"

And then he watched Sonny's eyes shadow over with grief—and he knew. "I thought you'd heard," Sonny said quietly. "Hetty died—three weeks ago."

Charlie was to know in that moment the difference between mere separation with its hope that sometime, somewhere, there might come the realization of the dream he had held so long and to which he had desperately clung; and the awful finality of death. He sat stunned, the fine flavor of his holiday gone, his wealth and success become ashes in his mouth. He realized in that brief journey into London, with piercing clarity, the powerlessness of money and fame to bring to him the simple happiness accorded the average man. He knew the futility of success when weighed against the joys of the spirit.

London welcomed him warmly and entertained him generously, the little waif of Kennington who had come home to them, the screen idol of the world. He found himself playing to London the hardest role of his life, that of a celebrity who by casual standards had everything—money, fame, public affection. Yet all his life he knew he would long for the clean, happy dreams of the years when he had been too young to know they would not come true.



To America

CHARLIE'S ADVENT in America came about, as he had predicted to Hetty with such bravado, in 1911, though it was more the accident of circumstance than his own doing. At seventeen he had by dint of hard work become a member of Fred Karno's well-known, almost classic, pantomime troupe. In 1910 Karno had sent out a series of vaudeville acts from London, known to the profession as *The Birdies*. There was *The Early Bird*, *The Mummimg Birds*, and numerous other groups, since forgotten, all tagged with "bird."

The Mummimg Birds were the first to become popular in America, but in deference to a different audience angle, they were billed as *A Night in a London Music Hall*. The act made its first New York appearance at Hammerstein's Victoria Music Hall, later to become the Rialto Theater. Billy Reeves, brother of Alfred Reeves, present manager of the Chaplin studios in Hollywood, was star of the act. Reeves played the drunk in the box who heckled the cast on the stage and constantly interrupted the show, to the huge delight of the



Charlie (in center) as one of the "Eight Lancashire Lads." Their skit at this time was called "Casey's Circus."



Charlie at the age of twenty-one as a member of the Fred Karno
"Mumming Bird" troupe (1910).

audience. The set itself depicted a stage within a stage.

At about this time, that genius at glorifying the American girl, the late Flo Ziegfeld, was casting about for comic talent to enliven his first *Follies*. He dropped into the Victoria and saw Billy Reeves in his hilarious comedy work. He knew no rest until he had lured him away from the Karno Company at a breath-taking salary, according to English standards. This, of course, disrupted the act. Alfred Reeves, who was acting as American manager of the troupe, left for London to recruit a comic to take his brother's place. He realized that as Billy was making a tremendous hit in the *Follies*, he was forever lost to them.

The wistful albeit humorous pantomime of the young Chaplin recurred to Alfred Reeves's mind. He suggested his name to Karno, who demurred: "Why, Alf, you know we've got to have a finished actor for that role. Chaplin won't do. He's too young and callow for the part."

Reeves was insistent. "Nonsense," he argued. "Young Chaplin has something in greater degree than my brother—originality. The boy's going far."

Upon such slender threads of chance are great careers woven. Reeves had his way, and Charlie was rushed to America by the first boat, to take his place in the stage box and annoy the performers in the act proper, of *A Night in a London Music*

Hall. Oddly enough, this was just after Hetty had arrived in New York with her sister. Shortly afterward the act was routed over the Sullivan and Considine circuit which extended to the Pacific Coast. Charlie left New York.

In 1913 motion pictures were struggling to emerge from the stage of crude, one-reel thrillers: Buffalo Bill pursuing strange-looking Indians over the plains, or the subtle and durable story of the sheriff in hot pursuit of the bloodthirsty cattle rustlers of the cow country. When the pursued of either plot was captured, the picture died of malnutrition.

The Karno troupe drifted down the circuit well received, and eventually reached Los Angeles. Mack Sennett, who was directing the crude comedies of the loosely thrown together organization later to be known as *Keystone Comedies*, missing an appointment with a friend one evening, dropped into a vaudeville house. His eye, trained to catch possibilities for the screen, picked out the overweening dignity of the little drunk in the box and stored it away in his mind for future reference. Mack Sennett had the vision to see that pictures would not always be the disjointed, jerky records of a chase.

A year passed. *A Night in a London Music Hall* was playing in the suburbs of Philadelphia. One night a telegram came to Charlie Chaplin reading: "ARE YOU THE MAN WHO PLAYED THE DRUNK IN

THE BOX IN THE ORPHEUM THEATRE THREE YEARS AGO STOP IF SO WILL YOU GET IN TOUCH WITH KESSEL AND BAUMANN LONGACRE BUILDING NEW YORK." It was signed by Mack Sennett.

Charlie was puzzled. He inferred that Kessell and Baumann were solicitors. Perhaps some relative of his in France or Spain had died and left him a legacy. Upon his arrival in New York, he went to see Mr. Kessell and was considerably let down to find that he was a motion-picture producer. Mr. Kessel told him that Mack Sennett, one of his directors, had assured him that he, Charlie Chaplin, had a future in pictures.

Charlie went home to his hotel and thought over the offer he felt Mr. Kessel was sure to make him the next day. He consulted with Alf Reeves, always his adviser.

"I hate to leave the troupe," he told Reeves. "How do I know that pictures are going to be a successful medium for pantomime? Suppose I don't make good? I'll be stranded in a strange country."

Reeves tried to calm his fears. "Pictures are here to stay," he assured the slightly frightened and bewildered Charlie. "You'll never get anywhere in vaudeville. You've reached the top now and what have you? Seventy-five dollars a week and no outlet for your talent."

The next day Charlie was asked what salary he was getting with the Karno Company. "Two hundred and fifty dollars a week," he told Kessel

shamelessly. After a bit of haggling he agreed to accept \$150 a week for his year's tryout in pictures, though he assured Mr. Kessel solemnly that only the prospect of life in the open air in sunny, mild, southern California could induce him to make such a monetary sacrifice.

Mack Sennett, by this time, was directing stories containing slightly more plot than the first "chases" but still far removed from convincing human action and reaction. It was the day of the "custard-pie" school of comedy, still the "knock-the-hell-out-of-'em" stage of dramatics on the screen.

It was 1914 when Sennett attempted the ambitious film of two reels, *Tillie's Punctured Romance*, in which Mabel Normand was starred. Marie Dressler was co-star. A slight wisp of a comic, affording a ridiculous contrast to her size, was slipped into the part opposite her. Sad-eyed and wistful, Charlie Chaplin began his film career, stopping custard pies with his face.

All Europe was in the throes of war, the most horrible and devastating carnage in history. America sat restively on the sidelines nursing her jittery nerves. The world wanted desperately to laugh; the soldiers, when they came out of the trenches for a brief respite, were eager for something which would take them, if only for an hour, from the mud and horror of war. *Tillie's Punctured Romance* was a decided hit both in America and

Europe. In the pantomime of the little chap shrugging his narrow shoulders at the futility of his struggles against fate; at his occasional triumphs, however brief, over the handsome romantic lead of the piece, the man in the trenches and the man in the street alike found a tragicomic symbol of their own attempts to retain some semblance of dignity and battered faith in a world suddenly gone mad.

Charlie's belief in his own ability, a natural conceit compatible with genius, came near to precipitating a small riot in the Keystone studios and his dismissal from the lot. He felt, and rightly, too, as has been proved, that he knew better than any director the "business" he wanted to use to portray the soul of the character he was gradually evolving for the screen. As he himself expressed it, "The little chap I want to show wears the air of romantic hunger, is forever seeking romance, but his feet won't let him."

Scripts not being written in those days, it being unheard of to film a published story or book, the scenarios were, for the most part, like children's make-believe, made up as they went along. The director had in mind some hazy thread of continuity, and the balance was left to chance. It followed that everyone on the lot, technical men, "props," on down to the office boy, stood around watching each sequence "shot" and feeling quite privileged to offer suggestions. In comedies, the success of the sequence was determined by whether

or not the assorted onlookers laughed as the scene was enacted for the camera.

Making a Living was the first one-reel picture in which Charlie appeared on the screen. In it he played the part of a reporter, in the conventional garb of the day. During production of this picture, he timorously suggested some bit of business. The director tried it out, just as he would have tried the suggestion of anyone interested enough to speak up. Actors as well as people might have an idea occasionally. Charlie went through the sequence; the group hanging about laughed heartily; the scene was left in.

Encouraged by this and possessed of the deep-seated conviction that he was his own guiding genius, Charlie made further suggestions. The director decided that he was fresh. Actors were just a necessary evil to a picture anyway. He ignored Charlie's suggestions.

This did not deter Charlie from advancing more and more ideas that were rank heresy at the time. He thought it quite unnecessary, for instance, for half the cast to chase the other half over miles of country and hundreds of feet of film to inflict upon them the ignominy of suffocation in custard pie. Secretly he considered the custard pie superfluous, but realized that he must not question its importance as yet. However, he dared to tell the directors and anyone else who would listen that comedy could be more convincingly enacted standing still!

His theory was met with incredulous stares. It was unheard of! It was too much! The ire of the director toward that "fresh little vaudeville ham" was unconfined. He was reported to Mack Sennett, who was now production head of Keystone.

Sennett, exasperated with Charlie, called him in and laid him off for a week, reminding him that he was an unimportant factor in the business of making comedies. He went on to say that after his disciplinary period had ended, he must be less difficult to handle, must do simply what he was told to do, no more. Sennett could not be expected to know that his words were falling upon the crystallized belief of an artist in himself and were bouncing off even as water off the proverbial duck's back.

Charlie, not in the least convinced that he was at fault, was merely noncommittal. At the end of his week's punishment (his salary had not been suspended), he was put to work in the picture, *Tillie's Punctured Romance*.

For some time now, Charlie had been toying with tentative costume combinations, seeking to evolve one which would be permanent. Selecting a garment now and then from the studio wardrobe, trying this combination and that, laying them aside and saying nothing. He was not going to lay his ideas upon costume open to condemnation until he had an ensemble which satisfied him; then he would have something definite to fight for. He was

sure there would be a fight. Finally he appeared in full regalia of the oddly assorted and bedraggled garments he had assembled. An Oxford grey cut-away coat bound in black tape, one size too small; under this a brown and yellow checked gingham waistcoat over a cotton shirt of black stripes on white; white stiff wing collar held by a blue and white polka-dot bow tie.

Trousers, light grey and bouffant from the fact that they were much too large for him; patched tan shoes almost twice the size of his feet clad the nether man.

The nervous little mustache, the small bowler, the soiled pink carnation as a boutonniere, the crumpled rag of a handkerchief peeping from his breast pocket, and fine jointed bamboo cane completed the ridiculous ensemble.

To Charlie the costume spoke with fine restraint of the man who is debonair and man of the world though his club consist of the sidewalks, his haberdashery, the ashcan.

The costume was previewed by all and sundry and pronounced not extreme enough! Charlie stuck to his convictions and the outfit came to be an integral part of his famous single characterization. Today the original is on a wax dummy of Charlie in the Los Angeles Museum.

The director assigned to the film being made complained bitterly of Charlie's continued disobedience. Serenely Charlie persisted in directing

himself in this picture, letting the other members of the cast fall where they might. It was agreed upon the lot that he was "difficult," "an upstart," even "impossible."

Soon the matter of his recalcitrance came again to a head; Sennett felt that something drastic about it had to be done. He called Charlie into his office. "Now, listen, Chaplin, I've had enough of this rowing. You'd better decide to do what you're told, or quit," he told him curtly. Charlie, in spite of his convictions that he was right, was terror-stricken. His imagination played him direful tricks. What if he were fired? Could he even get back with the Karno Company? He drooped. He went back on the set to try to be as inconspicuous and unassuming as possible. His inner rebellion at taking direction that he *knew* was all wrong made him unhappy. But he shivered with apprehension.

Somehow that day was endured. He changed into his street clothes and started home, the personification of dejection. Mack Sennett waylaid him. Charlie was wrathful at this second interview, was about to tell him he didn't give a damn what he did in the picture or how rotten it was and where he could put the whole industry, when he sensed something in Sennett's manner. It was not the blustering wrath of that morning. He was placating, almost friendly! Charlie waited.

"Look here, Charlie," Sennett choked over his

overtures, "you don't want to raise the antagonism of all these directors. They like your work and they like you personally. Whatever they tell you is for your own good. If you could just accept that, everything would be all right."

Charlie had no intention of accepting their ideas, which were contrary to those he knew to be better, but he was at a loss to understand this sudden change of front on the part of Sennett. He put off going home, strolled nonchalantly in and out of offices only to find the same tolerance, almost admiration expressed by the directors. Surely the atmosphere had changed. It was as if some galvanic current had run through the studio on wires, toward him. Privately he reflected that if they all *had* liked him, they had used a peculiar method of expressing it. Still he sensed something, definitely, some force working for him.

It was not until long afterward that Sennett cleared up the mystery for Charlie. He told him that a telegram from Kessel and Baumann in New York had come that day, ordering the studio to "make more pictures with the little fellow with the big feet and the baggy pants" as there was a loud and increasing demand for these pictures from exhibitors all over the country.

That evening, still not knowing his firm footing, Charlie bearded Sennett in his office. "I want to try directing my own pictures," he told the astonished producer, who was struck speechless but who

remembered he was between two fires. This was too much! It was all right to give out orders for the directors to get along with Chaplin, the strange little fellow who was so conceited, but direct his own pictures, forsooth!

"Who's going to pay for the negatives if you spoil them?" Sennett demanded. Ah, he had him there! He was totally unprepared for the faith of creative urge in itself.

"I will," came the prompt and succinct reply.

Sennett did some quick thinking. "Box office" in New York demanded more pictures of "Baggy-Pants." "Baggy-Pants" couldn't—or wouldn't—get along with the directors. Why not let him run his own show for one picture? It would either teach him he didn't know as much as he thought he did or there *would* be more pictures, because half the time now was consumed in quarreling. He gave his permission.

Charlie, elated over his chance to show them, quickly recruited his first cast and props. A few Keystone cops, a pretty nursemaid and a handsome soldier, some of the hated custard pies. He ordered the dubious camera crew and his company to follow him to a near-by park. They caught some of his enthusiasm as he worked furiously.

Within a few days *In the Park* was completed. The film had not much plot, was crude in construction, to be sure, but it was, nonetheless, a vast improvement on the comedies turned out by "ex-

perienced" directors. Charlie's speed of production impressed Mack Sennett.

Charlie, inarticulate, could not explain his helplessness in conveying to them all his own inner knowledge. He was in the first epoch of his art. He was not an actor as were those delineators of character soon to follow: William S. Hart, Douglas Fairbanks, Lillian Gish, Mabel Normand, Ford Sterling, and Jean Hersholt, the finest of them all. They could not have understood, had he found words to tell them that, like Nijinski in the dance, he interpreted *himself*; that even as Nijinski gathered up into his being the frenzy of all the passions of the world and flung them into the dance, so he, Charlie Chaplin, ached to gather up all the sadness and frustration and pathos in the hearts and lives of men and release it in his portrayal of humor! Nijinski is mad. Directors who had been "shoe salesmen, wholesale grocers, soda-jerkers," according to Grover Jones, now one of the foremost scenarists in Hollywood, then a painter of sets in the studios, could not be expected to do otherwise than characterize Charlie as "crazy," the usual epithet applied by the practical soul to whom art is a vague term and artists, anathema. They could not be expected to think other than that Charlie was a little mad; and they were right. He has the off-balance of genius, the somber nature of the artist in humor. But in his pictures, as in the completed work of all genius, there is *perfect balance*.

Mrs. Jones, of Poughkeepsie, does not know why she comes away from a Chaplin picture with a sense of incredible rhythm, perhaps does not know that she has that sense of rhythm at all. But it is there.

When *In The Park* was to be run off in the projection room, most of the directors on the lot as well as technicians came to see Charlie's downfall, to watch the discomfiture of "that fresh little squirt put back where he belonged." But within a few minutes the small room rang with their involuntary laughter. Charlie, seated modestly in the rear of the room, looking about surreptitiously, saw that even those who disliked him most were laughing heartily. He detected a sort of awe in their laughter. Sennett was laughing most uproariously of all.

When the short comedy was received with increased public enthusiasm, Charlie grew in self-confidence, was strengthened in his determination to do things *his* way. He had proved to his own satisfaction the importance of the technical precision of a creative work. Perhaps the basis of all his work, reduced to its simplest terms, can be expressed as putting in a ridiculous and embarrassing position, a man of outer dignity, what we are pleased to term a "stuffed shirt"; and oppose him to the little fellow with innate dignity who is desperately serious about getting out of the awkward situations in which he has been placed through no fault of his own. You will notice that Charlie's

chief concern, when extricating himself from a position, however painful, is to pick up his stick, straighten his tie and retrieve his battered bowler—even if he has just arisen from a fall on his head.

Restraint and more restraint, the direct opposite of the other pictures of the time, became his watchword, not only for himself but for the others in his company. His views, thought insane at first, were listened to with respect, once his popularity on the screen was noised about. He tried to make the others feel, as he did, the mirth of a situation wherein the person in a ludicrous position refused to admit anything out of the ordinary was happening and was pathetically obstinate about one thing—preserving his dignity.

The intoxicated gentleman who, though quite betrayed by his speech and walk and actions, wants to convince us that he has not taken a drop, is far funnier than the frankly squiffy gentleman who acknowledges it and laughs with abandon *with you* at his own condition. The latter condition is likely to induce pity or contempt instead of sympathy leavened by laughter.

Charlie took his small size into consideration in working out his effects. This brought an inclination to sympathy from the crowd. A bigger chap would have been deemed competent to look out for himself. He accentuates this weakness by working his shoulders, assuming a pathetic expression, a whole frightened air when confronted by the law

or any superior force—and captures his audience. There is always, of course, the direct tendency of an audience to feel within itself the same emotions as the actor on the screen or stage.

He had made great strides in showing himself to be the first full-fledged creator of the *living* picture. Of plastic expression, old as the world, he was becoming master.

Nothing was more natural than that Charlie, instead of accepting the young actresses who had already come before the film public and were established as types by other directors, should feel himself creative in this respect too.

His selection of Edna Purviance for the picture *Adventure* was something more than merely attraction to a pretty face, of which he has been accused. He continued throughout twenty years the practice of choosing raw material for his feminine leads, and this is consistent with his temperament. He, the sculptor, sees the clay, often of no fine texture, which he can mold into something approaching the perfection of his dream. That he has followed this course in each picture and that each leading woman who plays opposite him has failed to find success in her own right afterwards only confirms this fact. When the picture is finished, he is the true artist who cares not what becomes of the work which has served his purpose. He is the servant once more of the driving urge to create.

With Charlie established as his own director, it was inevitable that a battle for larger salary for the coming year should ensue. Sennett offered him \$250 a week, which he scorned.

Thus the matter stood, with Mack Sennett taking every precaution to guard his treasure from the onslaughts of rival film companies, when, one day, there rode up to the Keystone studios in Glendale Boulevard, in Los Angeles, a cowboy. Dismounting from his horse, he demanded to see Mr. Sennett. This aroused no suspicion in the minds of the special guards posted at the studio gate. After all, the cowboy had not asked to see Charlie Chaplin.

Mack interviewed the debonair cowboy, who admitted that he was an excellent actor as well as cowboy. Sennett agreed to give him a test. And when the test was run off in the projection room, the unsuspecting producer gave him a job. Just two days later this same cowboy who had proved his claim to "hard ridin'," and who was "Broncho Billy" Anderson, telegraphed his bosses in Chicago, the Essanay Company, that he could secure for them the services of the new and sensational comedian of the screen, Charlie Chaplin, for one thousand dollars a week. Without further ado, Charlie was signed to such a contract. This was on January 12, 1915. We can well imagine the tearful chagrin of Mack Sennett afterwards as he watched the meteoric zoom to fortune and world-wide fame

of the treasure he had let slip through his fingers.

Charlie left Keystone Comedies with fifty films to his credit, none of them more than a short two thousand feet of negative, and not all of them having been intended primarily for Charlie's characterization. Nevertheless, these comedies are remembered today with the star, the leading man, the whole cast and story merely a background for his inimitable miming.

He had learned the most valuable lesson a creative artist can learn; for in the fifty pictures for Keystone he had found that those in which he had tried to please the public were mediocre, failed to please, while those in which he strove to satisfy his own high standards, in other words, to please himself, were unfailingly popular.

With the Essanay Company aware of the value of his universal popularity, his pictures under their banner were wisely titled with the magic of his name. *Charlie's Night Out*, *Champion Charlie*, *Charlie the Tramp*, *Charlie at the Show*, to name a few, were simple studies of human emotions filtered through the personality of Charlie Chaplin's wistful little vagabond.

As soon as Charlie began to enjoy his spectacular success with Essanay, imitators of him sprang up in other studios. Billie Ritchie, Billy West, and Charles Amador were the most formidable, but at best they were only inferior impersonations of the character. It was not difficult, of course, to copy

the clothes and the make-up, but it was not only difficult, it was impossible, to *be* the somber, introspective little personality, bred in poverty and schooled in sorrow, with that certain gift of projecting himself into men's hearts. The mechanics of his personification were carefully copied—the slithering walk, the timid approach, but as with all imitations, the soul of their effort was conspicuous by its absence. It is to the everlasting credit of motion-picture audiences that they rejected such imitators and soon sent these plagiarists scurrying into less sacred fields.

An amusing incident came about, however, before the public awakened to the fact that these imitators were *not* Charlie Chaplin. Nat Spitzer, that imp of producers, who just a few years ago had all picturedom by the ears with *Ingagi*, the glorious hoax which laid Tarzan in the deep, deep shade; the picture so astounding as to give feature pictures released at the same time bad cases of box-office malnutrition; this same Nat Spitzer made a series of pictures in which he starred Billy West with the exact make-up and costume of Charlie and his antics copied to a nice degree. Spitzer's contract called for twenty-six Billy West films. He made twenty-four and tired of it all. It had been borne in upon him that there was something to Chaplin besides mere external effect.

Spitzer's partner wired him frantically long after Billy West had been allowed to depart that

they must turn over the other two comedies to the releasing company or they would be sued for their nether garments.

Spitzer sent out calls for West; they were in vain; he was not to be found. Spitzer was in a dither. He had two weeks in which to deliver the completed pictures. Grover Jones, painter-scenarist mentioned before, although he had a profound respect for Charlie's work, hated to see Spitzer in trouble and realized that two more of these pictures after twenty-four had been perpetrated would have no additional effect upon Charlie's career, so he suggested a young chap, Charles Amador, who was, in his opinion, the best of all the imitators of Chaplin.

Spitzer begged Jones to direct the two comedies. This Jones reluctantly agreed to do and was promised a substantial bonus for finishing them in time to save Spitzer's financial neck. So, Grover Jones made two comedies starring Charles Amador, who imitated Billy West imitating Charlie Chaplin. This, they hoped, ended the incident, but——

Amador, attempting to cash in on this fluke, got hold of a print of one of the films and toured the country calling himself "Charles Aplin." This reached Charlie in Hollywood, and he finally arose in his indignation and went to court. It was not long before his most flagrant imitator was explaining things to a judge. This skirmish left Charlie in sole possession, not only of any deriva-

tions of his name, but of the costume which he had originated.

When the year's contract at Essanay came to an end, Charlie refused to listen to any proposal for re-signing. He had enough money for his needs. He felt that his work at Essanay was at stagnation. He would not have been Charlie Chaplin if he had not reached out for swifter, more dangerous whirlpools of experiment.

He was given a contract by the Mutual Film Company, embodying a cash payment of \$150,000 and \$10,000 a week for twelve pictures during the ensuing year, a total of \$670,000 for the year of 1916.

Though this was a step forward in his development and though the Mutual studio was willing, even eager, for him to try out his own ideas, it was not until he acquired his own studio that he could indulge his "infinite capacity for taking pains" and approach the perfection of technique that was his constant aim. When that time came, he could with impunity use 36,000 feet of negative to achieve 1,800 feet of completed picture; he could spend two months and "shoot" every scene twenty times if he liked. There would be no one to say no.

Charlie's reaction to his astounding good fortune of the famous so-called "million dollar" contract with Mutual was pathetic while amusing. He simply could not take in the meaning of such a

sum. Fingering the check for the bonus, \$150,000, he remarked to his brother, Syd, "Well, I've got this much if I don't ever get another cent."

Syd, who had come over to assume charge of his impractical brother, had received \$75,000 for his share in arranging the deal.

Charlie remembered a small boy with his nose pressed against the show window of the Burlington Arcade in London. This boy had promised himself that if ever he got rich he would recklessly buy the whole window display of colorful garments. He went out in New York and bought himself a dozen neckties.

It was then that he began to haunt the street in which Hetty lived with her sister.

Edna Purviance

CHARLIE RETURNED from New York still dazed by his almost unbelievable wealth and unable to take in the full import of his popularity with the public. Shy and self-conscious, he shrank from his fellow motion-picture actors; he continued to live in a small room in the old Stowell Hotel in Spring Street, downtown Los Angeles. And at night after his stint before the camera he invariably escaped from his co-workers to wander the humbler portions of the town. Strolling abstractedly, gazing into the windows of secondhand stores and pawnshops, he would stop for pancakes or a cup of coffee in haunts where a dime meant a meal to their habitués, avoiding the imposing uptown shops where he might have had anything they had to offer and avoiding especially the Hofbrau House, the restaurant where stage luminaries from New York met—and patronized—the new and uncertain stars of the cinema. It was as if he had vague premonition of the world of false social values which because of his quick rise to fame must inevitably claim him, and here in the district nearest

the sordid actualities of his youth he could escape for a while.

Julian Eltinge, noted female impersonator, came to Los Angeles at this time, fresh from his triumphs in New York and on the road in *Cousin Lucy*. He was under contract to Jesse Lasky for three pictures, *The Widow's Mite*, *Countess Charming*, and *The Clever Mrs. Carfax*.

* Eltinge, together with all established stars of the legitimate stage, looked upon moving pictures as something to make hurriedly and try to forget. The attitude of the theater toward the new medium of expression was much that of merchants, a few decades before, toward the upstart five-and-ten-cent stores; these five-and-ten-cent movie houses offered a shoddy imitation of the more valuable commodity.

Ford Sterling, the outstanding comedian of films until Charlie came along, Raymond Hitchcock, and William Farnum became Eltinge's cronies at the Hofbrau House. Charlie Chaplin, the new and exciting personality who had just returned from New York where "foolish" Essanay had presented him with almost two thirds of a million dollars, was not in evidence. Eltinge's curiosity was aroused. He had seen some of Charlie's comedies, and there lay in the back of his mind the conviction that here, in the despised medium, was something one could not discard with the epithet, tawdry. He asked after Charlie and

was rewarded with the information that he was a lone wolf, avoided his fellows, and hung about the meaner districts of the town.

Coming away from the Hofbrau House late one night, Eltinge saw the slight, inconspicuous figure standing before a secondhand shop window, his hands clasped behind his back, his whole attitude one of unawareness of where he was. Eltinge stopped and spoke to him, asked him to have a drink. Charlie uncertainly accompanied him to a near-by bar.

They became friends. Eltinge's friend, a Mrs. Slater, an Englishwoman, gave a party. Sir Beer-bohm Tree was guest of honor. Eltinge escorted Geraldine Farrar and the little comic he had asked permission of his hostess to bring. Sir Beerbohm was immediately attracted to Charlie, pronounced him a "very intelligent young chap." As for Charlie, this impact of esteem from a knight of England, a great actor, was as a decoration of merit. It gave him a confidence in himself which adulation from the American public had failed to achieve. He expanded; he bloomed. He was grateful to Eltinge for his sponsorship and clung to their friendship.

Most of all, this consideration in the flesh of the people who had reached realization of their powers had its effect upon his work. For, while criticism and opposition had never disturbed his tranquility, his sureness of craftsmanship, this human appro-

bation warmed and encouraged him to outstrip himself.

One rainy evening soon after Charlie's introduction socially, at Sunset Inn overlooking the sea at Santa Monica, Gus Kerner, maître d'hôtel of the resort, was discontentedly surveying the almost deserted dining room. (The place was usually filled with motion-picture people and their friends.)

Mayor Berkeley, Chief of Police Ferguson, and Captain Clarence Webb, with Police Judge King, all of Santa Monica, sat at a corner table. At the other end of the large room another party occupied a table with a view of the Pacific. The officials called Gus over.

"We notice you're permitting that woman over there to smoke, Gus," said the Mayor. "You know it's against the law for a woman to smoke in a public place in this town." He looked toward the other party, where a smartly groomed woman puffed on a cigarette held in a long golden holder.

Mr. Kerner's gaze followed the Mayor's. He hesitated. He stammered, "B-but, gentlemen, that's Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt, and the lady and gentleman with her are Sir Beerbohm Tree and his daughter Miss Iris."

Chief Ferguson looked a little startled. He cleared his throat.

"Well, Gus, the law's the law. I'm sworn to uphold it."

Gus sighed. All he needed to round off a stupid evening was to insult prominent guests. "Okay, gentlemen, I'll—I'll go right over. . . ." He stopped and clutched at what turned out to be a brickful of straws. "That other one, the little fellow at the table, is Charlie Chaplin!" he blurted out.

Official Santa Monica raked the little one with a strangely unofficial look. "Oh!" they chorused. "Why didn't you say so? We didn't recognize him without his make-up."

Chief Ferguson added sheepishly, "I guess, fellows, it'll be all right to make a sort of exception to the rule in this case. What do you say?"

But the others had forgotten the blue laws and were intently watching every move of Charlie's.

Unable to understand why Charlie clung to his dingy quarters in an obscure hotel, Julian Eltinge urged him to move to a better district. Finally in the fall of 1916, Charlie gave in to his importunings and took rooms in the Los Angeles Athletic Club. Syd Chaplin persuaded him to buy a motor-car and take on a secretary.

So it was at the Club that Toraichi Kono applied to Tom Harrington, the new secretary, for the job of driving the big Locomobile touring car Charlie had acquired.

Harrington satisfied himself as to Kono's credentials, then took him into the bedroom to see Charlie.

"I found a nice-looking, black-haired young

chap in bed, eating his breakfast," says Kono. "When Mr. Harrington told him what I wanted, Charlie stopped chewing long enough to ask me if I could drive a car. I assured him I could. 'Well, I can't,' he said and grinned. 'You're smart.' He then turned to Mr. Harrington and said, 'Take him out for a try,' and went on eating.

"We drove about Los Angeles, which wasn't very crowded, for a few minutes, and Mr. Harrington informed me I was hired. My wife and I were to live near by, between the Club and the Engstrom Hotel where Miss Purviance, Charlie's leading lady, lived. I was to start at wages of thirty dollars a week."

The arrangement which was to take Kono into far countries as confidential secretary to Charlie Chaplin, to mingle with nobility and royalty; to drag them both through wells of tragedy and offer him association with the best minds of the civilized world, for almost eighteen years, began as simply as that. That Kono remained stolidly indifferent to these minds and their ideas; that he was not able during all that time to learn to speak English intelligibly; and that he has regarded Charlie as little more than a Cockney upstart, speaks volumes for Charlie's lack of discrimination in choosing his immediate associates. Or it proves, perhaps, the unassimilability of the Japanese.

Kono is a materialist. Genius, art, and temperament leave him unmoved. He did have a certain

respect for Charlie's earning power, but secretly considered the public fools to shower him with their adulation and money.

It is not to be denied that Kono's care of Charlie's personal affairs was excellent; that he never for a moment forgot his duty; that in every instance he put the well-being of his employer, as he saw it, above his own. He was trusted by Charlie to a greater degree than any previous or contemporary employe. Personal letters and telegrams were always addressed to Kono, instead of to Charlie. Telephone numbers of Charlie's intimates were never kept by the star but by Kono. He was personal ambassador representing Charlie even to his wives, in instances that, could they be told in cold print, would be as funny as anything the master of comedy has ever portrayed on the screen.

Kono's apprenticeship for the confidential position he was to enjoy later was exhausting, the hours long and uncertain. Underneath he bore resentment at being ordered about, for had he not given orders to servants in his father's household?

At a few minutes to nine, each morning, he called for Tom Harrington and drove him to the Los Angeles Stock Exchange. Harrington held power of attorney for Charlie, to buy and sell on 'Change, transacting all trading with the strictest honesty and efficiency.

Returning to the Athletic Club, Kono would pick up Charlie; they would then drive to the hotel

for Edna Purviance and proceed to the Mutual studios in Lillian Way, Hollywood.

Staying about the studio most of the day awaiting orders for occasional errands, Kono imbibed a fair knowledge of the externals, at least, of the madhouses of that day politely called studios. He acquired a surface acquaintance with that intangible, all-important attribute of his artist-employer, temperament.

The motion-picture industry was growing by leaps and bounds; its scope was widening faster than the actors and actresses, the directors and technicians, or even the producers could follow. Not the least striking was the evolution of the Chaplin comedies from the most elemental slapstick violence into an expression of restrained drama embodying that humor which is so deeply woven into the fabric of human life.

The change was gradual but sure; Charlie knew that no sharp break could be made with the traditions of picture making, young as they were. With infinite pains he imposed upon himself more and more restraint, discouraging overacting, or acting at all, as he was wont to put it, on the part of other members of his casts. True humorist that he is, he studied laughter and its contrast, pathos, until he knew how to provoke the former with rare precision; how to give it the irony of the latter. Subtle, wistful, always charged with the underlying vein of pathos, the humor of each succeed-

ing picture satiric and tender, stinging and ardent, dug more deeply beneath the surface of fundamental human emotions and brought up for the vast and increasing audience for films, a savor of the sweetness of adversity, a taste of the frail triumph of the spirit over the forces of evil and superior physical strength. True, there has always remained an earthiness, a strong vein of vulgarity, Rabelaisian in its simplicity, in Charlie's pictures, with which there should be no quarrel. It brings into sharper relief the delicate, *spirituelle* meaning of the basic theme, the spiritual and romantic hunger of the little chap who is "forever seeking romance, but his feet won't let him."*

His astonishing progress was based upon no new and untried premise, but the proof of his originality was that he did not *know* the Italian comedies of the seventeenth century or the British pantomime of the eighteenth; he simply was sure that the custard-pie, blow-for-blow, senseless actions of a group of types brought together for just any film was no form of expression for an artist. And he constantly fumbled and blundered forward toward an intelligent ensemble of plausible characters who portrayed living, breathing human beings.

Edna Purviance had come from Reno, Nevada, where she had been a typist, to seek a job in pic-

* He always speaks of his characterization in the third person. "He" must be coaxed into doing what Chaplin the director wants him to do.

tures. There were hundreds of young girls from over the country, coming to Hollywood and clamoring at the gates of the studios, and a need for them in inverse proportion.

After months of discouragement and dwindling funds she had wandered into a crowd gathered before the gate of the Mutual studios. She gave in to an impulse born of desperation, demanded an interview with Mr. Chaplin himself.

Something in her manner arrested the attention of Charlie's secretary, and she, alone of the liberal sprinkling of girls in the crowd, was admitted and taken directly to Charlie.

She was beautiful, Charlie saw at once, but so were many others. It was not that. There was something about her not actually existent but buried within her which he alone could sense. With the swift decision that is his invariable habit, he offered her a screen test.

In the projection room he witnessed the test run off. She was terrible! Clumsy and self-conscious before the camera, no sense of dramatic values. But he was more interested than if she had been good. Here was a challenge to take her on, mold her to the form he must have.

Patiently he persevered, and Edna, who was soon violently in love with him, strove hard to do as he bade. Together their efforts were, in good measure, successful, for in *The Count*, *The Pawnbroker*, and *Adventure* she justified his belief in

the plastic quality of her substance under his modeling hand.

Kono embarked on his own acting career in the picture *Adventure*, which was filmed at Santa Monica Beach. In this film Charlie is an escaped convict walking along the beach in his stripes, trying to find a suit left by some bather on the sand, when he hears cries of distress from a girl (Edna Purviance) floundering among the breakers. He plunges into the surf and rescues the girl. But the hero (?) of the piece (Alex Campbell) resents Charlie's bravery—he is afraid to save her himself—and promptly kicks him back into the ocean. It is here that Edna wrings her hands in sympathy for the brave little chap who has saved her and calls for her chauffeur to rescue Charlie, who, his strength gone with that one spurt of effort, is helpless against the force of the waves.

Kono was given the part of the chauffeur at fifteen dollars a day. He was delighted. He could earn in two days the amount of a whole week's wages. But here the screen lost an actor and Charlie gained a future private secretary. For some friend of Mrs. Kono's told her of having seen her husband's features on the screen. Mrs. Kono went to view *Adventure* and then went on a search for her husband with fire in her eye. She reminded him that in Japan actors were rated the lowest form of animal life. She reminded him also of his ancestors who *could* not speak to him and of her

family who *would* not if he pursued this disgraceful line of action. Kono retired from the screen after a very brief career, indeed.

The Fireman, The Vagabond, The Rink, Easy Street, The Immigrant, The Cure, Behind the Screen, and One A.M. completed Charlie's year's work at Mutual. By almost Herculean effort he accomplished them, for he had, by leaps and bounds, outgrown the simple two-reeler themes, and "in his head," as he does most of his "writing," was forming the skeleton of a much more ambitious picture.

At the end of the year he refused to re-sign with Mutual studios or with any other. Startling them all, he formed his own production company, the Chaplin studios, and contracted with First National Exhibitors for the release of eight films during the year for a total consideration of one million dollars. Alfred Reeves, the former manager of the Karno unit, whose moral support had been Charlie's from the first step, was put in as studio manager, which position he holds with efficiency and loyalty today.

Charlie now had the two things he had yearned for, financial independence and with it the freedom to work out his own destiny. He reveled in his right to be himself, unfettered for the first time in his life.

His first films under his own banner, daring expansions of the former two-reelers, *A Dog's*

Life, Shoulder Arms, Sunnyside, and A Day's Pleasure, are proof of his right to grow in his own way to the climax of the picture that will live, *The Kid*.

Edna Purviance followed him as leading lady through *The Kid*. She had been Charlie's constant companion, mothering him as almost every woman desired to do, once she laid eyes upon him. Charlie tired of her, but he wanted to do something to show his appreciation of her companionship even though he had lifted her from obscurity and fashioned her into a creditable actress under his surveillance. He knew that she had no career ahead of her, realized, what he could not explain to her, that only under his tutelage could she act. Yet he was the type that must walk alone; could not suffer the cloying sweetness of a permanent tie.

He cast about for a means of compensating Edna for what some inner driving force was compelling him to do, break his engagement with the woman who, had he not been Charlie Chaplin, destined to walk in lonely reaches, might have made him an excellent wife and, what is as important, a kindly counselor and sincere friend for the rest of his life.

Charlie prepared a story for Edna, *Woman of Paris*. In this, her first starring vehicle which was to be her last picture, Edna Purviance was to reach a height of dramatic acting unknown on the screen at that time. She gave a splendid delineation of a Parisian woman of joy. Adolphe Menjou,

playing opposite her, was started upon his own successful career.

If Charlie felt any qualms after seeing *Woman of Paris*, over what he was determined to do, he gave no sign. Perhaps he knew better than anyone else that Edna was only Trilby to his Svengali. At any rate, he put through the plan to incorporate the picture under the name of "Regent Film Company," allotting Edna certain shares which would give her an income of \$250 a week. Though the royalties from the film have run out through the past ten years, she still receives a comfortable remittance from the Chaplin Film Studio.

Apparently Edna was glad to leave pictures. Perhaps she recognized the truth of Charlie's evaluation of her as having no inborn talent as an actress. She went abroad to live.

Miss Purviance has latterly returned to California and now lives at Manhattan Beach, near Hollywood. True to her promise given Charlie at the time, she has demanded nothing from her former idol—neither money nor influence.

First Marriage

TO BE THE OBJECT of national, even international affection and adulation at the age of twenty-eight, surrounded by all the outward expressions of admiration and a little envy is a pleasant enough experience for the average man. Charlie Chaplin did not bask and preen himself in public acclaim as lesser stars were wont to do.

Within a bare four years much had happened. Lured from the comparative obscurity of an English vaudeville troupe by an opportunity he had failed to recognize as such, pulled up by the bootstraps of his own genius to an expression on the screen which placed him above the component parts of "a suburb [Hollywood] which has successfully striven through the years to make a fine art of mediocrity,"* Charlie was now, if he chose, one of them, the idols of the day, Mary Pickford, Owen Moore, Mabel Normand, Helen Ferguson, Lew Cody, Ford Sterling, Charles Ray, and others.

He was at all odds the best, even in the, as yet,

* Cedric Belfrage in *Black & White*, a magazine ably edited by Wilbur Needham, critic on the *Los Angeles Times*.



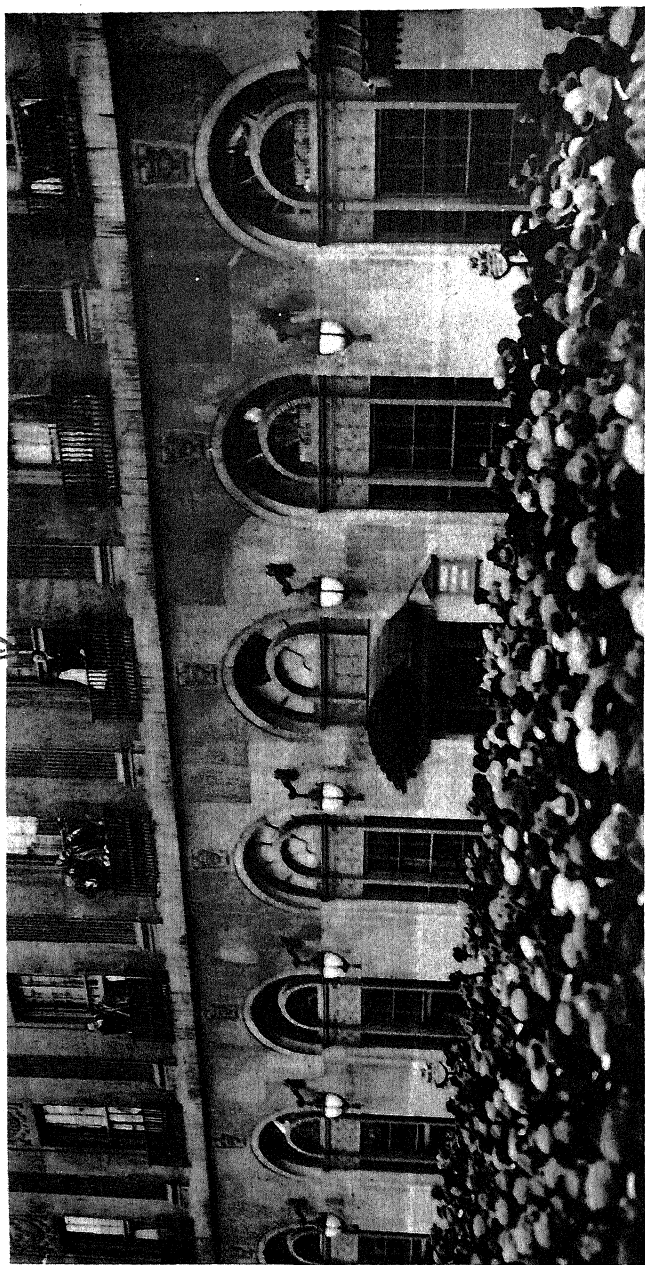
Charlie in a still from *The Rink*.



J. D. Williams, Edna Purviance, and Charlie in 1917.



Charlie pleading with a crowd in Pershing Square, Los Angeles, to buy Liberty bonds, 1917.



Charlie speaking from a window of the Statler Hotel in Detroit for the Liberty Loan in 1917. Traffic was halted while twenty thousand people thronged the street to catch a glimpse of their idol.

meager outlet he had found for the flame within him. He was not understood, of course; was not considered a "good fellow," but he was accepted for his obvious success with the motion-picture public and for the money he commanded.

In the summer of 1917, Charlie, Mary Pickford, and Douglas Fairbanks toured the larger cities of the United States, paying their own expenses, for the Liberty Loan. Together the three charmed hundreds of thousands of dollars from socks and from under mattresses, from bank accounts, to buy the government bonds which did much toward the successful outcome of the war for the Allies.

Upon their return, Charlie was invited to the home of Mary and Owen Moore on Del Rey Beach. It was there that he met Mildred Harris. She was fifteen at the time and had enjoyed an indifferent success in pictures as a child actress. Her best effort had been the role of a small sister to William S. Hart in *Cold Deck*, his starring film, in which Sylvia Breamer and Alma Rubens played the two feminine leads. Hart had picked up the youngster, Mildred, from her play about Triangle Studios, where he was under contract and where her mother was forelady of the sewing room, a part of the studio now dignified by the title "wardrobe."

Mildred was under contract, at the time of her meeting with Charlie, to the late Lois Weber, then director of children's films. She photographed well; her golden hair and large blue eyes pictured

child innocence; hers was the charm of extreme youth.

Here, as in the case of Edna Purviance, was no great actress in the making, simply an average young girl with a certain regularity of feature and nice coloring; and here she would have remained, in all probability, until she became too mature for such parts and subsequently slipped back into the obscurity whence she came, had not Charlie Chaplin attended the party on that memorable night at Owen Moore's. And the irony of the whole tragedy to ensue was that Charlie merely dropped in occasionally at such gatherings that he might not be considered an unsociable boor.

Driven remorselessly by his mistress, Humor, Chaplin has lived a double life from the start of his achievements in Hollywood: the group life of the studio where he became a reasonable employer, producer, and director as well as star, inviting the co-operation of all of his assistants; and, underneath, another life, secret, passionate, and intense, involving a succession of bad-tempered days and troubled nights until the idea upon which he is working has emerged from its mental incubation and can be brought into the cold light of day. The underlying motif of the latter phase of his existence is—escape. Always must he run away, break out of the net of circumstances which his own desires and actions have woven about him. He is assailed periodically by the realization that hu-

man relationships can never be wholly satisfying, but they are the tragic necessity of his life.

Charlie has never, in the deeper sense of the term, been in love, save once, and that was the idealistic episode of his adoration for Hetty Kelly. But there is no doubt that he was infatuated with Mildred Harris at their first meeting. She was enraptured by the attention paid her by the richly gifted genius of the screen, in love more with the idea of being loved by one so famous and rich than with the man himself. Perhaps, in her youth and with her shallow nature, she was not only incapable of penetrating the dark, secret places of his mind; but it is doubtful if she even realized there *were* those recesses of his inner life.

Charlie threw himself into his courtship of Mildred with all the ardor of the idealist who believes each time that perhaps this is the one. He endowed her with qualities, in his own mind, with which she did not have speaking acquaintance. She was content with surface appearances.

Charlie's manner with women, attractive ones, has always been engagingly diffident. He has the air of a small boy with freshly scrubbed face and carefully brushed hair who has just escaped from the capable hands of his mother, and he engenders in each woman to whom he is especially attractive, the desire to continue the motherly ministrations apparently so recently left off.

Mildred lived with her mother in the Cadillac

Hotel in Venice. Charlie sent great mountains of flowers each day to their rooms. The girl was no proof against this display of devotion. Her mother liked Charlie, admired him, but was worried about their association, especially when rumors reached her of Charlie's sitting for hours in his car in front of her studio, in the cold and rain, waiting for her to appear. Mrs. Harris was frankly averse to a marriage of any sort for Mildred, who was barely sixteen, and she told Charlie this.

There is no certainty, of course, that marriage entered Charlie's plans at this juncture. However, it came about that in the fall of 1917 Mildred Harris and Charlie Chaplin were married. To this marriage a baby was born, a malformed infant which lived only a few hours.

Miss Harris has stated that with the death of this baby Charlie's love for her died. This is far from the truth. But it is a conviction consistent with her desire to mold her husband into a typical man of family. Perhaps she shrank from acknowledging to herself that this marriage was a sordid failure from the outset. Kono, who was bound by no sentiment, declares that Charlie's "love" for Mildred was dead long before their marriage. Be that as it may, Charlie was irritable and apprehensive over the idea of parenthood and the responsibility it entailed. And he strained at the bonds which held him in semblance of the usual man from the start.

It would be easy for the average critic to cry, "Rotter!" at all this, but the truth remains that Mildred's white and gold beauty had betrayed him into something intolerable for him—the dead level of the average.

Charlie loves children, the child mind. He works for hours, days, to perfect one scene which he knows will delight the hearts of thousands of children. Any genius loves humanity in the abstract, but historical biography proves to us the incapacity of the artist for normal companionship with the majority of his fellows. The trap of fatherhood and marriage was almost more than Charlie could contemplate with sanity. The path of the average he rebelled against instinctively with all his might.

The situation for both Mildred and Charlie soon became intolerable. Frivolous and headstrong and emotionally undeveloped, Mildred expected an immediate transformation into the average, commonplace husband, of the strange, melancholy, lonely soul she interpreted as "cold and indifferent."

Charlie sulked and brooded over their mutual mistake. He wanted to escape; Mildred wanted to hold him, not as he actually was but as something she fancied he should be.

A house at 2000 DeMille Drive in Lachman Park, on a lonely hillside, was leased as a home for Mildred and her mother. Charlie made a genuine effort to become one of the household. The young wife did not like the isolation of their home, wanted to

be in the center of the gaiety of the movie colony, have parties and fun. Charlie ignored these wishes. The house was adequately staffed with servants, a car and her own chauffeur provided for Mildred. She was given unlimited credit at the stores and shops for the household and for clothes and luxuries. What she did not realize, would not accept, was that this was *all* he could give her.

Charlie rose early before daylight in the mornings and walked. Often Kono would be called to come and get him, from the Biltmore Hotel, a distance of perhaps ten miles from his home. He had walked all the way.

Mildred and her mother were left to rattle about the large house, breakfast alone, perhaps not see Charlie for two days at a time. Mildred was pregnant and more sensitive, thereby, to such cavalier treatment; her mother was worried over the probable consequences of her unhappiness, the ill effects of grief upon the health of the prospective mother and child. Charlie, upon the rare occasions when he did dine with them, was irritable and moody, his mind upon one thing—escape. Altogether not the idyllic dream of romance which had the sentimental women of the nation sighing!

Mildred tried to think of ways which might bring Charlie back to the fire of their early relationship, not realizing that she had been merely the symbol of something he was seeking, would always seek, and for which he would ever be condemned

by the unthinking. She telephoned his studio daily when he began staying overnight at his club. Tom Harrington was instructed by Charlie not to call him from his work, to tell Mildred that he was busy, could not be disturbed.

The long weeks of unhappiness, her extreme youth, demanded their toll of Mildred and the child. The infant was born, its stomach upside down. Too frail to withstand an operation, it died after a few hours.

The six-month lease on the house in Lachman Park expired. Charlie leased another at 674 South Oxford Drive, near Wilshire Boulevard, in Beverly Hills. Mildred still was given everything in material comforts and luxuries for which she could wish. Charlie moved permanently to his club.

After the death of the child which, paradoxically, saddened Charlie, he pursued his relentless efforts to goad Mildred into suing him for divorce. Mildred pursued, just as stubbornly, her idea of breaking him in to the role of husband. They got nowhere. Charlie began to be seen with various girls in public; he would drive Mildred, for her pride's sake, to divorcing him. She would, he believed, before long, take steps to extricate herself from the intolerable position of being wife and no wife.

When Charlie had bought the property at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and La Brea Avenue, in Hollywood, as the site for the Chaplin studio,

he had acquired with it the large house fronting Sunset Boulevard. It had been his plan to demolish the house and build offices in its stead, but he ran afoul of some building restrictions which prohibited such offices within that distance from the Hollywood High School, several blocks away. He furnished the house expensively, then decided against living in it; it was too close to the studio. He preferred living at his club.

Kono, with his wife and small son, was prevailed upon to occupy the huge house. It was soon apparent to Kono that Charlie was guilty of an ulterior motive in wanting him to live in the house. He would arrive with various girls, ask Kono to prepare them dinner, and serve it before the great fireplace in the living room.

Mildred moped in her home. Many nights she would get into her car and have her chauffeur drive her to the corner of Oxford and Wilshire Boulevard, through which it was Charlie's custom to be driven by Kono to the Athletic Club in Los Angeles. Charlie, huddled in the tonneau of his car, would see the forlorn figure of his wife in the other, waiting for a glimpse of him, perhaps a word with him. Rage at himself, at her, at the world, and at the futility of life, would overwhelm him. He would order Kono to "drive like hell." And Kono, torn with sympathy for Mildred separated from Charlie by eons rather than by mere physical distance, would, of necessity, "drive like hell." All this

intensified Mildred's role of the neglected wife.

Accounts of Charlie's supposed erotic, nocturnal adventures seeped through to Mildred as he had intended. Finally she succumbed to the oft-repeated suggestion of Anita Stewart, her best friend, that she attempt to make Charlie jealous. She must invite some man to the house regularly, insisted Anita, let Charlie get wind of it, and see what effect *that* would have. Perhaps it would make him realize what he was losing. It was the one sure way to wake up an indifferent husband, Anita naïvely assured her friend.

Mildred half-heartedly agreed to the proposal. Together they hit upon Anita's brother, George Stewart. It would be safer, they agreed, to keep it, after a fashion, in the family. So, George good-naturedly came, with Anita and her current admirer, to dine several nights each week at Mildred's home. They saw to it that Charlie was apprised of the "goings-on." The plan worked, but not as they had intended. Charlie, hearing of Mildred's supposed interest in another man, was cheered by this news. The brooding shadows which had pursued him for months were partly dispelled; he hated himself and the whole usual world less. For he wanted to believe that Mildred was infatuated with George Stewart. And he pounced upon this half-truth as the evidence he might be able to use to extricate himself from a marriage hateful to his soul.

Kono was driving him home to his club one evening, when Charlie proposed that they do a bit of detective work, sneak up in the yard of Mildred's home, and see for themselves what was going on. Kono remonstrated with him. If he really wanted evidence, he argued, why did he not go about it in the regular Hollywood way, get a private detective? But Charlie, less from penuriousness than from the fact that he wanted his drama, insisted upon their playing the sleuth. Kono gave in; he realized that Charlie must do certain things to see what would be the results. He stopped the car, got out, and hesitated.

"Take off your shoes," Charlie ordered. Kono did so. "Now, you go ahead," Charlie continued generously. "I'll follow."

"That's good of you," Kono muttered to himself. "If there are any bullets to be stopped, your skin will be safe."

With catlike tread they reached the rear court of the house. There was not a car in sight. All was quiet about the place. There was a light burning only in Mildred's bedroom upstairs. They returned to their car.

On three separate nights this performance was repeated, before final success (?) was theirs.

Charlie was elated to see the house brilliantly lighted on this occasion. In stockinged soles he and Kono walked noiselessly into the court; sure enough there were two cars in the drive!

Keeping well behind Kono, Charlie made his way toward a side door of the house. It was a glass French door, and they could see, he whispered, through the filmy curtains, but——

As they approached the door a heavy masculine voice rang out, peremptorily ordering them to stop where they were. Kono heard a scurry of stockinged feet behind him and knew that Charlie had scampered away, leaving him to face the music. He looked up into the gleaming muzzle of a wicked-looking revolver and made out dimly behind it a sardonic smile on the face of what was practically the largest man he had ever seen outside of a circus. A detective!

"What are you doing here?" the detective boomed.

"Why—why this is my home," Kono stammered.

"Oh, yeah? Well, you don't live here any more. Get the hell out and tell that little runt you work for, to get out, too."

Kono got. He transmitted the highly complimentary message to Charlie, who grinned appreciatively at the man's description of him and promptly ordered Kono to put on his shoes and go back and talk to the detective, offer him money to come over to his side.

Kono gingerly approached the door once more. He knew that Mildred's guard could shoot him and make it plausible in court, by designating him a prowler. The detective was on the watch.

"What do you want now?" The words rang out like a shot.

"Mr. Chaplin wants to see you," Kono replied in what he hoped was a soothing voice.

"Well, I don't want to talk to Mr. Chaplin or you either. His wife don't want him around here a-tall, so both of you git!"

"But you don't understand," Kono expostulated. "Mr. Chaplin will pay you money if you'll just tell him what his wife is doing and——"

"You tell Mr. Chaplin to go plumb to hell," was the emphatic rejoinder. "I've took on the job of protectin' this little lady, and that skunk of a actor hasn't got money enough to make me double-cross her."

Kono retired from the scene with the best grace he could muster. Perhaps, he comforted himself, this fiasco would bring Charlie to his senses, show him that discretion, in the end, would be best. He relayed the unflattering sentiments of the officer to Charlie, who was, he suddenly realized, enjoying the whole thing. However, for several weeks Kono heard no more of their becoming eminent detectives. Charlie, he hoped, had dismissed the whole matter from his mind. But such was not the case.

He rushed into Kono's home a few weeks later, excited. Mildred had chartered a yacht, he told him, and her party of eight had stayed out all night. He had learned the names of some of the guests which included Anita Stewart and her

brother George. He had telephoned his attorney, Arthur Wright (the brother, now deceased, of his present attorney, Lloyd Wright), and Tom Harrington, told them to be on hand. They were all going to San Pedro, the harbor town of Los Angeles, and get some information from the skipper of the boat.

The three of them drove to San Pedro, where after a great deal of questioning of boat agents, they learned the name of the Norwegian captain and owner of the yacht. They dug him out of his home and asked him to come out on the boat where they could talk undisturbed.

The captain gathered the crew together at Charlie's suggestion, and they all repaired to the small craft tied up to the dock. They sat about a table in the dining room, and Charlie broached with diffidence, using more finesse than he had with Mildred's protector-detective, the purpose of their visit. He was struck with the thought that liquor might succeed where he could not, and dispatched Kono back to the studio for whisky and champagne. That was the glorious era of Prohibition in America, and he was loath to drink the firewater and varnish remover they might find down some of the back alleys of San Pedro. Perhaps if he could loosen the tongues of the seamen they would be more susceptible to his importunings.

It was a stormy late afternoon. Kono reached the studio, some thirty miles away, without mishap,

but as he reached the Union Railway viaduct, on his return, near Torrance, a huge tree crashed down directly across his path. He jammed on the brakes, but the car skidded and, swinging about parallel with the fallen tree trunk, in some unaccountable manner, straddled it. He was helpless to go either one way or the other.

Remembering the liquor he had in the tonneau, loosely covered with a blanket, Kono shuddered. He pictured himself in jail.

Dozens of cars had come up but were stuck in the congestion started by Kono's mishap. Policemen on motorcycles appeared as if by magic and, together with a few stout-hearted motorists, finally succeeded in pulling the tree out from under the Locomobile. Now, thought Kono, this is where the fun starts. But, much to his relief, they waved him on without even a casual survey of the interior of the car.

Arriving in San Pedro after an hour's delay, he found Charlie indifferent to the load of liquor, apparently not even interested in getting the information on Mildred's supposed unfaithfulness. He and Tom Harrington and Arthur Wright were having a wonderful time, listening to the old salt's tales of sailing the high seas. Kono served the drinks—and more drinks. Charlie informed Kono that the Captain had assured him there was nothing to tell about Mildred's party. Miss Harris had conducted herself with the utmost propriety. No

one had been drunk on board; they had eaten dinner, danced to a gramophone, and gone quietly to bed at a decent hour, the young women pairing off together in cabins, the men likewise.

Kono heard no more of personal sleuthing. Charlie went about his work of making pictures, relieved somewhat, apparently, by the thought of Mildred's getting some enjoyment apart from him.

Divorce—The End

TOWARD THE END of the second year of their marriage Mildred Chaplin filed suit for divorce. Now that the desire which had lain so heavily in his thoughts was about to become a reality, Charlie was frightened. The position of a public figure dependent upon public approbation was, as he knew quite well, an unstable thing at best, ready to topple at the slightest wrong move. Young women with not too much backbone who married rich celebrities in Hollywood were apt to take advantage of this, by advice of unscrupulous attorneys or by their own mental force. Their charges, often more dramatic and sensational than true, resolved the whole transaction of the divorce and property settlement into a piece of legal form of the ugly word, "blackmail." Being practically aware of this, increased Charlie's apprehensions.

Charlie's fortune, long since, passed the million-dollar mark, and marked by penuriousness, frightened always by any threat of onslaught against his wealth, he now dwelt upon one thing: how much money he have to give Mil-

What effect would the sensational divorce have upon his career?

He turned to his attorney. Mr. Wright answered the question. He urged Charlie to let his attorneys handle her attorneys for a general settlement. Charlie murmured. He was actually in no danger of divorce. Mildred comfortably well off and contented the transaction in a spirit of friendship.

But Mr. Wright became convinced that Charlie would not listen to his advice in this transaction. Charlie said, no, no, Mildred would come to the points of agreement on all visible points. She would ask for a wife's share of property properly taken, at this point. Her attorney, of the caliber, urged that Mildred, say \$10,000 and save several months of fighting and recrimination. Charlie refused to listen to the good advice of Mr. Wright that he should have hundred thousand cash balance in his name in the settlement. Wright advised that if Charlie refused to fight it out, he should immediately, to the acceptance of the court, beyond the reach of the court. It would seem that Tom Harlow would come to accept the responsibility. But whether he refused to take it or whether Charlie did not suggest it was not ascertained.

In any rate, the hundred thousand fell to the

of a young writer employed at the Chaplin studio, who readily agreed to the transfer, too readily, as Charlie could see afterward, looking back.

Then there was the matter of *The Kid*, the first eight-reel picture in which Charlie was starred and which he directed and produced—the film in which four-year-old Jackie Coogan rose to almost overnight acclaim.

Painstakingly and laboriously, Charlie had worked on *The Kid*. He was in full realization of his own power, his ability to give out that mystical quality which, for want of a better name, we term personality. His own invention of himself was unfettered by time or expense or any interference. All his fervor to escape into the frustrated little figure of his characterization on the screen had accumulated into a climax of expression in this picture.

What if he did spend two weeks shooting the scene in which the small Jackie stirs up pancakes for his stepfather, Charlie, who reclines luxuriously in a rickety iron bed, spread with ragged, disreputable blankets? Two cameras each used two thousand feet of negative daily; approximately fifty thousand feet of film in all were used to get the precision of the seventy-five feet of finished scene which is ended as Charlie arises from the bed, looks about him as if for his fur-lined robe, and finally sticks his head through the largest hole in

worth the fortune spent in its making?
Coogan, who could not act, was proof
of Charlie's creative genius. With his large,
dark eyes, he *looked* the part, and Charlie fashioned
him in long hours of patient labor into the per-
fection for his own inimitable artistry. Jackie
went to Paramount, in a flare-up of fame, with
a reputation that no other child star had though
he was only a child. His popularity
was such that no other
child star could

Charlie was under contract, as has been stated,
to the National for eight pictures to be released
for a lump sum of one million dollars within the
year when had been completed and distributed:
After Life, *Shoulder Arms*, *Sunnyside*, *A Day's
Pride*, *Pay Day*, *The Pilgrim*, and *Woman of
Pride*. The National expected *The Kid* to com-
plete the contract.

Charlie explained to them the high plane of
achievement he had reached in this picture without
special expense, that he had spent in making *The
Kid* the total of his year's contract price for the
entire year. He had spent the rest of the money
he had on his own expenses. He had lived on his
own money.

had been his in spending so lavishly for perfection, balked. Their contract, he reminded them, called for eight pictures, no titles specified. If they wanted to hold him unreasonably to his contract, he would immediately give them the eighth picture, but it most certainly would *not* be *The Kid*. First National was puzzled as to how this could be accomplished, but they soon found out!

Charlie, in impish glee, gathered together the scraps cut from the seven preceding pictures. They were pieced together into complete picture length, and the result was probably the most amazing insanity of uncorrelated sequences and hodgepodge of cast ever thrown on to a screen in a projection room. First National, stunned at the preview, yelled, "Chicanery!" Hollywood laughed. And Charlie's pantomime, involving nose and thumb directed at them, was explicit in its invitation.

While the releasing company was trying to digest this, Charlie was busy. He gathered together Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, and D. W. Griffith, producer of *Birth of a Nation*, and hurriedly organized United Artists, a corporation for the release of pictures.* First National screamed again in protest. Charlie smiled. If they wanted to pay him a sum commensurate with the cost and probable profits of *The Kid*, they could have it. If not, he would distribute it through his newly founded company and be damned to them! Finally,

* William S. Hart later joined the company.



Mildred Harris, Charlie's first wife, at the age of sixteen.



Founders of United Artists. Douglas Fairbanks, Dennis O'Brien (attorney), Mary Pickford, David Wark Griffith, and Charlie.

First National agreed to pay a million and a half dollars for the picture and at this figure made a substantial profit from its world release.

The Kid was just barely completed, had not been "cut"* when Mildred sued for divorce and division of property. Charlie was warned by his attorney that an attachment would in all probability be clamped on the negative from which numerous copies are made for distribution. He must remove it from the state of California.

Kono was sleeping soundly in his bedroom on the second floor of the studio house, one night, when he awoke with a start to hear someone calling his name from the garden below. He stuck his head out of the window. It was Charlie in a high state of excitement.

"Come on down," Charlie called in a stage whisper. "We're going for a ride."

Dazedly, Kono hurried into his clothes and, leaving a note for his wife to expect him when she saw him, he joined Charlie at the garage in the rear of the house.

"We've got to get *The Kid* out of the state," Charlie went on to explain. "I thought of Mexico, but the attorneys say to keep it in this country, but to get it as far as Utah."

Together they jammed the reels into the first thing at hand, an old suitcase of imitation leather.

* Many sequences are cut from the liberal footage of film shot for each picture. Film cutters work from the script and the director's final criticism.

But when they lifted it, to carry it out to the car, the handle broke under the heavy weight. Kono quickly caught up some rope and wound it round and round the suitcase. They hoisted it into the back of the car and, jumping in, drove out through the back streets of Hollywood, peering into the night for possible followers, through Los Angeles to the state highway leading to Barstow.

It was the summer of 1919. Gasoline conservation laid down for the public, that year, allowed the purchase of only three gallons of gasoline at the time; if the tank had as many as three gallons in it when measured by the rulestick kept handy at all service stations, the driver could not buy more. Charlie and Kono were in constant fear of running out of fuel between stations, for the big car consumed it at a fearful rate. They were also haunted by the constant fear of pursuit by deputy sheriffs ready to serve Charlie with papers and bring him back to Los Angeles. And the heat through Imperial Valley and the desert was well-nigh intolerable.

No one appeared to be following them, however, as they crossed the California state line and slowed down to take stock of their situation. They realized that neither of them had a change of clothes and, worse, neither was supplied with enough money to reach Salt Lake City, Utah, or to feed the car and themselves adequately. Moreover it was nerve-racking trying to keep the automobile fueled be-

tween scattered stations. They decided to pool their remaining cash and buy railway tickets for Salt Lake City.

They arrived in the Utah city, a seedy, rumpiled, unshaven pair, their only luggage the disreputable-looking suitcase tied about with rope. Taking a taxi to the Hotel Utah, a hostelry noted for its splendor of appointments, they found, after paying the taxi fare, that eight cents was their total remaining assets. Even shaves were out of the question.

The hotel clerk took one look at the unshaven pair approaching the desk, followed by a bellboy carrying a battered rope-trimmed paper suitcase, and hurried into the manager's office. He reappeared reinforced by that worthy resplendent in morning coat, white piping on waistcoat and striped trousers. There was a significant look exchanged between them after a glance by the manager at the prospective guests. It was evident that Charlie and Kono were a superb composite picture of everything they did *not* want in their hotel. "I'm sorry," said the clerk, "but we have no cheap rooms."

This was too much for Charlie, who strolled away striving to control his mirth.

"Nobody asked for cheap rooms," Kono tried snubbing the sartorial elegance before him, but felt that the odds were against him. The manager eyed him speculatively. The assurance in Kono's

manner did not go with his beard. He gave the clerk a signal. The latter pushed a registry card toward Kono, doubtfully. Kono signed "Charles Hill" and "Toraichi Kono."

He then hoisted the suitcase containing the precious contents into view.

"Put this in your vault. It's worth a million dollars," he laconically told the astonished clerk. The clerk took hold of it gingerly as if he expected it to go off any minute, and placed it under the desk.

"No, no!" Kono protested. "Put it away in your safe!"

The clerk lifted a haughty eyebrow and ignored Kono's protestations. "The rooms will be fifteen dollars a day apiece," he informed Kono, "payable *in advance*."

"What you mean 'in advance'?" Kono came back indignantly. "We got baggage!" He heard a muffled snort from Charlie's direction. The remembrance of the impressive luggage had been too much for him. Kono sent him a reproachful look.

Looking dubiously from the suitcase to Kono, as if he expected the former to explode under his feet, the clerk gave up and struck a bell for a boy to show these two tramps—or crooks—to their rooms.

Still worrying a bit about the safety of *The Kid* kicking about under the hotel desk, Charlie and Kono found themselves in two back rooms facing a dreary court. "And fifteen dollars a day," sputtered Charlie through his laughter. They took

stock of their finances again, searching every pocket, turning them inside out. Still eight cents! And not until they had obtained legal advice on the safety of the precious lead-encased reels in the "luggage" could they risk disclosing Charlie's identity.

After much-needed baths, but putting on the same soiled linen and rumpled coats, they ordered a hearty lunch and cigarettes sent up to their rooms.

"I think I'll tip the waiter a dollar," Kono said nonchalantly.

"Yes, do," returned Charlie. "What do we care for expenses?"

So Kono signed the luncheon check with a flourish after adding to the items on it, a dollar. "They're going to be madder'n hell," he reflected comfortably. Charlie nodded complacently.

Replete with the first satisfying meal in days, Kono went down to the desk and with the same grand manner he had employed in informing the clerk that the ratty-looking suitcase was worth a million dollars, he now asked for the name and address of the best, most prominent attorney in the city. It was difficult for him to keep a straight face now as the clerk's horrified expression told him only too plainly that it had been a grave mistake to harbor two such suspicious-looking characters, whose first need was a lawyer. However, instinctively obeying the unwritten law of hotels, "the

guest is always right," he grudgingly gave Kono the name of the outstanding attorney of Salt Lake City. Kono set out, on foot, for his office.

It may be wondered why Charlie delegated to his chauffeur a mission of such importance, but Kono had demonstrated already an ability to conduct business which, though not brilliant, was superior to Charlie's in grasp of details, and Kono's patience and Oriental fatalism were a balance to his own volatile temperament. It was scarcely a year later that Tom Harrington resigned as confidential secretary to Charlie and Kono took over the post to hold it until 1934.

The attorney, after he had spent the better part of an hour consulting impressive tomes of law, assured Kono that *The Kid* was safe from any legal proceedings instituted in California. Kono hurried back as fast as five cents of the eight would carry him on the streetcar; he and Charlie sprang into action. Wires were sent to the studio, collect, for money, for film cutters, and for a projection man, but even this was not accomplished until after a final battle between Kono and the hotel clerk, augmented by the manager. The victory was Kono's; the hotel would stand for the telegrams if they were refused at the other end.

Revenge was sweet. Kono enjoyed writing the telegram requesting the studio to forward to Charles Hill, Hotel Utah, Salt Lake City, a large sum of money; another asking for clothes to be

sent for both of them. Of course, the telegrams were read at the desk before being sent, and the members of the hotel staff were impressed in spite of themselves, albeit still a bit skeptical.

A money order for ten thousand dollars was duly received the next morning, and it was necessary to disclose Charlie's identity to cash such a sum at the bank. The bank teller telephoned the hotel, and the management of the latter awoke with a shock to the fact that they had, in the person of the diffident-looking figure who had walked timidly about their lobby and whom they had relegated to back rooms facing a court, the one and only Charlie Chaplin!

The best suite in the hotel was proffered them at once, at no advance in price, with fear and trembling by the management. Charlie maintained a straight face and accepted this attempt at amends graciously, but back in his room he enjoyed the discomfiture of the staff, imitating them for Kono's amusement and ending up with howls of glee. Wasn't this proof of his pictures? Human reactions to money and influence? They dashed out for shaves.

Upon their return to the hotel they found the lobby swarming with reporters from every sheet in the vicinity. What a story! And what was that color on the face of the manager? And of the clerk?

Brisk, well-groomed studio technicians arrived by the first possible train, carrying *good* bags.

Charlie and Kono blossomed out in well-pressed suits and clean linen.

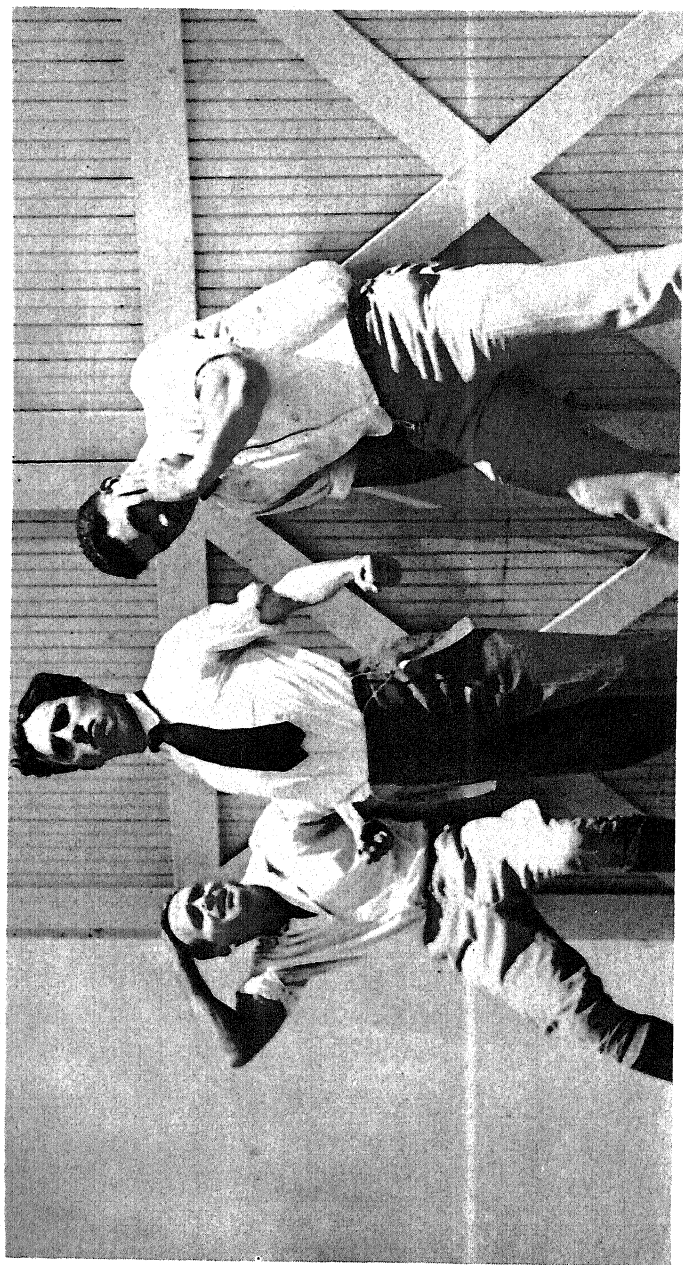
Cutters were set to work under the direct supervision of Charlie on the stupendous job of reducing a half million feet of negative to nine thousand feet of picture. A temporary projection room was rigged up in the hotel ballroom and the film run off repeatedly to show each step of progress. At last it was accomplished to Charlie's satisfaction; the hotel staff and their families were invited to a *sub rosa* preview of *The Kid*.

Mildred, as it turned out, was not overgrasping. Arthur Wright apprised Charlie, from Hollywood, of her agreement to a reasonable financial settlement out of court. The amount involved was only one hundred thousand dollars, a fair share of any community property the court officers had been able to find. There were flurries of adverse publicity in the newspapers, but on the whole Mildred had been rather discreet and not vindictive in the matter.

Charlie wired Tom Harrington to retrieve the hundred thousand dollars in the keeping of a studio writer. But when Harrington went to collect, the writer returned only ninety thousand, keeping ten thousand as fee or perhaps as balm for his underpaid feelings, writers being looked upon, at the time, as super office boys and paid but slightly more than the actual flunkey. Charlie, when he learned of this loss, merely shrugged. It was all in the day's



Charlie and Jackie Coogan in *The Kid*.



Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie, and Jack Dempsey, heavyweight boxing champion of the world at the time, clowning on the studio lot.

work of being a target at whom anyone who had a weapon was privileged to shoot.

Another financial blow descended upon Charlie when the attorney in Salt Lake City presented his bill. Lawyers apparently in some cases fix their fees according to the value of the property under litigation or discussion rather than according to the amount of time and labor spent. Twenty thousand dollars seemed a large amount for less than an hour's work. Charlie objected—and naturally—to the fee, but in the end he had to pay or be subjected to more unfavorable publicity just when the debut of *The Kid* was to be held in New York.

Kono returned to Hollywood, and Charlie and his small company, with *The Kid* properly housed in good crating, proceeded on to New York for the world premiere.

The overwhelming success of the picture added new and exciting laurels to the already firmly placed crown of the King of Comedy. He was the hysteria of the moment; New York practically mobbed him as the newspapers with psychic powers of prediction reported the places in which he could be seen each day. Crowds followed him in the streets, robbing him of the privacy of an individual. At intervals this expression of public approval and affection was welcomed by Charlie. It was the stamp of appreciation of all his months of exhausting work at such cost to his physical resistance. But always after just so much of it, he must escape

from the overpowering attention of the crowds. He realizes, as a more superficial celebrity does not, that he is only the tangible symbol of his art. To retain the capacity for that art he must lose himself either in work or in the normal companionship of a few congenial fellows.

Charlie went back to Hollywood imbued with the idea for another picture—a short one to be named *The Idle Class*. The company was engaged, the picture cast, Charlie's hieroglyphics jotted down on reams of Los Angeles Athletic Club or Chaplin studio paper, arranged into the semblance of a script. Sets were hurriedly prepared. It was to be the first picture since his own company was formed not carefully "written" and worked out with painstaking preliminary care.

This procedure can be credited to nervous exhaustion rather than an inclination to revert to his former length and style of picture. It was, he discovered, as preparations went ahead, against the grain. Never again would he make a "quickie," which is a picture thrown together within a few weeks in which, usually, a star on the peak of popularity is "borrowed," the "name" giving impetus to an otherwise cheap production. He abandoned the making of *The Idle Class*. We shall never know whether this picture was to be his conception of the wealthy "lion hunters" who had captured him in New York, Connecticut, and Long Island, or a portrayal of the actual idle class of America, the

hoboes who roam the country stopping in woods or on the banks of streams to rest and cook their mulligan, a stew concocted of meat and vegetables past their pristine freshness and donated by kindly merchants.

Charlie was tired. An attack of influenza had weakened him. Depression of the spirit followed the impulse he had been guilty of to cheapen his work. Underlying all this was the gnawing desire to see Hetty again. He could not accept the tricks of fate which separated them, could not forgive himself his own lack of courage. He went to bed.

New York and London

THE LATE MONTAGUE GLASS, author of *Potash and Perlmutter*, invited Charlie to dinner at his home in Pasadena. There was, besides the happy family atmosphere of the Glass home, a steak and kidney pie for dinner which evoked with its aroma memories of occasional "good days" in Kennington Road, and added to his nostalgia for England.

Driving back to Hollywood, he took stock of himself. He was restless and irritable, unsatisfied by the grind of picture making relieved only by an occasional trip to New York.

The Kid was to have a gala English premiere. He had never seen one of his pictures outside a studio projection room, felt that he had missed something vital and stimulating. He wanted to be patted on the back by his fellow countrymen in England; to meet his contemporary fellow artists there. Why not? And who could tell what emotional upheaval had occurred which might give Hetty back to him? As he sat slumped in the back seat of his car he even dared picture to himself, Chaplin, the man, married to Hetty Kelly; wind-

ing the clock at night, putting out the cat, even as the genial Montague Glass, who had certainly made a success of *his* life both artistically and domestically, had done that night. He thought of the small daughter of Glass who had come in for a few minutes to say good night. He remembered the little pat Glass had given his wife, the look of perfect understanding they exchanged.

"I'm going abroad!" he yelled to Kono. "I'm going to see England and let England see me. I'm going to France and Germany and Russia."

Preparations were rushed, and the next night Charlie, accompanied by Tom Harrington and Carl Robinson, took the train for New York. Carl Robinson, stepson of William Fox, one-time owner of *The Police Gazette*, was to act as his publicity director.

Most of Hollywood was at the station. Charlie Chaplin was suddenly going abroad! Reporters besieged him. Why was he going? What had happened?

He was going on a secret mission, he told them gleefully.* There, that would give them pause. They wouldn't believe him anyhow if he told them the truth, that he was simply going for an emotional holiday.

They pounced upon the words "secret mission."

* Charlie's propensity for giving out information dictated by his moods led to an article in *Collier's*, March 16, 1940, replete with misinformation, and a subsequent break in diplomatic relations with its author, Kyle Crichton.

They dashed for telephones. Charlie Chaplin was going to Russia, they informed their avid editors. He was a Bolshevik. He was going on a mission for the United States Government!

The train finally pulled out, Syd Chaplin shouting, to the amusement of the crowd, "For God's sake, don't let him get married, Carl!"

More reporters, all along the line, tipped off by the news over Associated Press that Charlie Chaplin was coming through, besieged him. Charlie Chaplin, the man, trying to escape from Charlie Chaplin, the celebrity.

"Mr. Chaplin, why are you going to Europe?"

"Just for a vacation."

"Are you going to make an pictures in Europe?"

"No."

"Are you going to get married in England?"

"No."

"What do you do with your old moustaches?"

"I throw them away."

"What do you do with your old walking sticks?"

"Throw them away, too."

"Have you got your costumes with you?"

Charlie smiled at the absurdity of the questions.

"No," he replied.

"Why not?" was the query.

"I don't think I'll need them."

One reporter yelled louder than the rest. "Mr. Chaplin, do you ever expect to get married again?"

"Oh, yes."

"To whom?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"Mr. Chaplin, are you a Bolshevik as reported?" another inquisitor dared. "Now, watch the guy clam up," he threw as an aside to a colleague.

But Charlie met this with equal imperturbability. "I am an artist. I am interested in life. Bolshevism is a new and challenging phase of life. Therefore I must be interested in it."

There were more dashes for telephones. Charlie Chaplin is not taking his hat and stick and moustache with him. Charlie says, "I won't need them in Buckingham Palace." Charlie Chaplin is, by his own admission, a Bolshevist. Charlie Chaplin is going to Europe in search of a wife. He says Hollywood girls are not beautiful enough. Charlie Chaplin will make pictures after this in Russia!

In New York he found Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, who had not been married long. They were anxious for his vacation to be a success. He must get away from pictures, they told him. Why not come with them tonight to see Doug's new picture, *The Three Musketeers*? Charlie sighed; he was nettled; he did not want to see anybody's new picture, any picture at all. He went with them to *The Three Musketeers*. Doug explained earnestly that he wanted Charlie's honest, unprejudiced criticism. Charlie gave it. Douglas listened politely and let the picture remain as it was.

Next, he was invited to see Mary's new picture, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*; was again asked to give his honest opinion. Weakly he went. The changes he suggested were smilingly ignored. He finally escaped his good friends, the Fairbankses, and turned his efforts toward escaping New York, but that was not easy.

Word had got about that he was in town and ready to play. There were old friends eager to help him, new acquaintances to be met. He must see Eva LeGallienne and Joseph Schildkraut, both of them splendid artists, in *Liliom*; there was a breakfast for him at the Coffee House Club where he met Heywood Broun, Frank Crowninshield, and Edward Knoblock, Condé Nast, and the lovable if caustic critic-wit, Alexander Woollcott. He lunched next day with Max Eastman, radical and editor of *The Liberal*, an old friend. There was a party that evening at Eastman's.

Charlie gave a party at the Café Élyseé. The Coffee House list was augmented by the Fairbankses, whom he had forgiven, Neysa McMein, who wanted Charlie for a subject of one of her distinctive portraits, and Madame Maeterlinck.

Madame Maeterlinck, who had been Georgette Leblanc, a great dramatic actress until she submerged her talent to become the ideal mate of Maurice Maeterlinck, was no longer with the poet. A woman of rare intellect and charm, aside from her dramatic gifts, she had produced *The Blue*

Bird when no other producer would touch it, and to great success. She herself had played the part of "Light." A young girl, fifteen, one Renée Lahon, had played "Cold in the Head." Despite the unromantic appellation of this latter part, Maeterlinck had been strongly attracted to this lovely child, and, eight years later, in 1919, two years before this meeting with Charlie, Georgette Maeterlinck, her great heart broken, had moved aside to make way for Renée Lahon as the young wife of the middle-aged poet.

Through the pages of *Wisdom and Destiny*, his book which may yet be posterity's declaration of Maeterlinck's highest genius, there moves a woman so gracious, so loved, that one can only think of the Maeterlincks as the Brownings of this century. This is Georgette Leblanc, who stood between her poet-mate and the warring world in the early days of his struggle for recognition, inspiring him and strengthening him in his belief in himself. Maeterlinck, who was to feel the loss of such a love when it was too late, has written, "Man is granted in his short life, only one love."

The high light of Charlie's party at the Élyseé was the impromptu rendition of *Camille* with Georgette Maeterlinck in the title role and Charlie, as Armand. It was—well—different! In the great death scene, Camille coughed as she had done through countless vivid declines, but as she coughed, Armand unexpectedly caught the dread

disease and died before Camille, completely taken by surprise, could really go into *her* death. This turn of the tables, to which Georgette played with rare comedy, sent the party into convulsions. It is at these spontaneous outbursts of parody that Charlie is at his social best.

The next morning, the day of sailing, a reporter yelled through his hotel room door, "Mr. Chaplin, *why* are you going to Europe?" It had begun all over again.

An exasperated Charlie shouted back, "To get away from you damned pests!" *That* was not quoted.

Once on the boat, Charlie consoled himself, he would be alone and obscure, a man free and alone with the sea and the sky and his thoughts. But he had reckoned without the newspaper cameramen! There were droves of them assigned to catch his every mood and action until they must take the pilot boat back to shore. Charlie hated "stills," had no use for cameramen except when they were on the lot recording the sequences for his pictures. He eluded them, as he thought, and went to the promenade deck from where Edward Knoblock, whom he had met at the Coffee House Club, was watching the maneuvers with some amusement. Knoblock's play *Cherry*, recently produced, had brought him a measure of recognition, but *Lullaby*, on which he was working and which was to be produced in 1923, was to increase that measure.

They talked of plays. A news photographer found them and asked Charlie to pose waving and throwing kisses to the Statue of Liberty. Charlie, enraged at being asked to do anything so obvious and cheap, refused fierily. Knoblock tried to shoo away the ubiquitous photographer before Charlie flared into a state promising him bodily harm.

Other newsmen swarmed upon them, and the ordeal lasted until the pilot boat drew away and set out for the pier. Relaxing, thinking that at last he could be himself, he turned to find, of all things, a photographer who had been assigned to cross the ocean with him! The man talked fast. Charlie listened with growing resentment.

"Listen, Charlie, I'm sorry; but it's my job. We may as well get together on this thing. It will make it easier for both of us. Let's see, today I'll take you with the third-class passengers. That'll show you're democratic, see? Then the second-class playing games with——"

"You go to hell," was Charlie's succinct reply. He called for reinforcements. Knoblock and Robinson responded. They explained to the newsman that it would be a violation of Charlie's contract with United Artists to allow exclusive photographing. The photographer was unimpressed. He was sent by his paper to get him and get him he would in spite of hell and a great deal of water. Charlie flared up at his effrontery. He would, he informed him, stay locked in his stateroom the whole way

across. The press-appointed recorder of his actions smiled knowingly. Mere walls of a stateroom would not dismay *him*, he declared. Hadn't he been assigned to get the King of England at one time? And had the walls and guards of Buckingham Palace stopped him? They had not!

A compromise was effected eventually. The newsman would have to catch his own poses, but Charlie would not deliberately avoid him.

Charlie forgot the cameraman. He was approaching England—and Hetty.

Southampton and its welcome! Charlie in England at last! Overcome by the spontaneous affection of the crowd, he forgot his carefully rehearsed speech of reply to the mayor's declamation of welcome. He was rescued from the good-natured crowd, the jostling, milling mass of admirers. Then came the dread news from Sonny. Hetty was dead.

Gone was the happy anticipation of being lionized by the England he loved. He took refuge in the melancholy pleasure derived from hours spent in his childhood haunts.

Kennington Gate. It was here that Hetty stepped down from the tram that first time, and sent him so close to heaven that he came back to earth with a handful of stars!

Kennington Cross. It was here that music first entered his being, wakened him to its beauty and

meaning. On that night so long ago, he had wandered, alone, an adolescent youth, dreaming dreams far up and beyond the sordid actualities of his existence. Suddenly the strains of a clarinet and harmonica drifted out from a house. He stopped and tried to capture the lilting rhythm of *The Honeysuckle and the Bee*. He hummed it to himself, became conscious of some sweet mystery of sound of which he had been, hitherto, unaware.

Years later, in *The Vagabond*, he takes a violin from the gypsies he has stumbled across in camp, and plays.* He moves them, with their own instrument, to tears. He is thinking and feeling all the great music in which he has immersed himself since that awakening. He is drawing great rounded, sobbing tones from the violin. The music which had come to him from his father's being had been lying dormant in his consciousness until that night in Kennington Cross.

It was arranged, soon after his arrival in London, for Charlie to meet Sir James Barrie. It was on common ground that these two men trod. Barrie, more infallibly an artist in his comedy than in his pathos, like Hans Christian Andersen, blends the everyday world with the fairyland of his own imagination. Yet, like Dickens with his kindly humanity, he entices us to a borderland of

* The instrument is strung in reverse, for Chaplin is a left-handed player.

laughter very near tears. His characters invariably display a tendency to make life a game with the angels. Barrie always preferred a heavenly failure to a too-worldly success.

In *Peter Pan*, a poetical pantomime, he more nearly approaches the perfect balance of fantasy. The ruling idea was an infinite tenderness for the child with stars in his eyes, not the depiction of the problem play. Yet Robert Louis Stevenson has written perhaps the aptest criticism of his contemporary, the author, "There was genius in him, but there was a journalist on his elbow."

Charlie was taken aback when Barrie informed him that he wished *him* to play Peter Pan. He was immensely flattered. He appreciated Barrie's genial if not incisive satire, his bizarre fancy. But he was also frightened at the very thought of attempting a part so delicate and fragile, a part to which Maude Adams had given an unearthly poesy; a part which he himself had not created.

Charlie was less flattered but not at all frightened at the unmerciful lashing Sir James gave *The Kid*. "The heaven scene was entirely unnecessary and crudely done," Barrie declared. "It should have been suggested rather than portrayed. You stressed that to the undoing of other fine situations. And why the meeting of the mother and father? It was the child's story—and yours. The other was dragged in——"

"I cannot agree with you, Sir James——"

Charlie, stung to defense of his dramatic construction, lost his self-consciousness, forgot to be embarrassed. He enjoyed Barrie; they became good friends upon Charlie's return to England ten years later.

The high light, perhaps, of his London stay was the meeting with Thomas Burke of *Limehouse Nights* fame. Through his love for Burke's stories, he had a strong feeling of kinship with the man; saw London through the same glasses, as it were. They arranged to spend a whole night roaming the Limehouse district together.

From Burke's books, his accounts of lusts and elemental passions, Charlie expected to see a man of larger physical size. He was mildly astonished, therefore, when he beheld a slight, nervous chap with a thin, almost peaked face. His mouth was mobile and sensitive, his eyes glowing with a warm tenderness for the foibles of the human species. Charlie imagined he detected a twinkle of amusement buried in their depths as Burke regarded him soberly.

"You don't care much for motion-picture actors, do you?" Charlie inquired with directness.

"I'd hardly say that," was Burke's rejoinder. "And you're not just another actor. But I've been reading of your hectic doings, and I've always wondered at people's inordinate passion for meeting celebrities. To me, it's a sort of admission of mediocrity."

"My God, I hate it all," was Charlie's fervent exclamation. And, at the time, he meant it.

"I think," Burke continued as if Charlie had not spoken, "it's simply being able to tell their friends they have met So-and-so, to acquire a vicarious prestige."

"And the irony of it is," Charlie pointed out glumly, "that they never see the real chap. They see only a mask—oh, sometimes an impressive one—but never know the human being behind it."

Burke nodded agreement. There was silence for a while as they strolled toward the starting point of their exploration. Charlie found himself unable to control for much longer, though, his praise of Burke's stories of the districts which beat a strange pulse in the heart of London. Burke retreated from this onslaught of appreciation behind a wall of reserve. And Charlie, fresh from the hyperbole and superlatives of Hollywood, caught himself up, remembered that writers in England were Englishmen first, then writers. His enthusiasm *did* sound fulsome, he realized, but it was sincere. He shut up.

They walked on in silence, in a communion of feeling, a sort of intimate desolation together notwithstanding the verbal barrier, into the narrow streets and shadows of Limehouse. There slipped noiselessly by the timorous, secretive, or skulking forms of all Burke's characters from out *Limehouse Nights*. There in the murky gloom, fresh-

ened by the tang of the river, touched by a remote promise of the sea, Charlie became aware of something moving and vital that had its being only in a district where white and yellow and brown swarmed in conglomerate mass yet were unassimilable. Behind the dim lights of attic windows were taking place the actual dramas of the place where love goes hand in hand with death; where poetry, exquisite and yearning, sings in the hearts of ugly Mongolian outcasts; where knives are buried in white breasts or in swarthy necks with never a backward, fleeting regret. Limehouse. The place of pity and terror; of degradation and beauty; and the wonder of primitive love which has nothing to do with the laws or morals of the world outside.

Slowly they walked, Burke occasionally lifting his stick to point out some seemingly meaningless happening which took on for Charlie the deepest significance. Burke seemed to know that Charlie took in his impressions through feeling rather than seeing, and spoke no word to disturb the subtlety of his absorption through the senses.

All night they walked, stopping occasionally in some dark niche for a cup of coffee. Toward morning, as a grey dawn, hardly less forbidding than the night, lightened the eastern sky, they retraced their steps toward Highgate, coming out into streets brightly lighted and normal and bustling which relegated all the strange and heart-stirring

adventure of the night to between the covers of a book.

They talked now of more usual things. Burke confided in Charlie the narrow physical boundaries of his own life; he had never been outside of London. "Why go?" he asked simply. "All life is here in this one city. I have not time in the years allotted me to explore its half." All of Burke's books are concerned with the London he constantly searches for its vital characters.

Charlie and Thomas Burke separated, Charlie reflecting upon the curious sweetness in the heart of the man he had just left. Burke saw, he said to himself, the beauty which grew in filth, what we are pleased to call the lowest. Charlie was aware, as never before, of the clear fragile tracery of the things of the spirit against the murky, bestial background of the deepest slums.

Charlie met H. G. Wells. He was disappointed, not in Wells but in the manner of their meeting. He was told by his publicity director that Mr. Wells would be glad to see him one afternoon at Stoll's, one of the agencies of United Artists. Expecting a quiet talk with Wells, Charlie was amazed and annoyed to find a dense mass of humanity wedged into the narrow street fronting Stoll's. His heart sank. It would not be a chat with Wells, but a prearranged personal appearance, the snapping of camera shutters, interviews—everything that

made a vacation and companionship with stimulating minds impossible.

He recognized Wells immediately by the likeness of his rugged features to his photographs and looked into eyes dark and stormy blue. Wells was annoyed also.

The camera brigade swooped down upon them. Would Mr. Chaplin and Mr. Wells pose together? Thank you. Now, with their hats off. Thank you again. Now sitting enjoying a chat—the irony of it!

Autograph seekers filled the space left by the departing cameramen. Wells and Charlie signed until their hands ached. And now, a quick-sketch artist. The two unwilling models exchanged a few superficial remarks while posing. They escaped as soon as possible, separated, and an hour later Charlie received a note from Wells:

“Come to dinner. Wrap up in a cloak if necessary and slip in about seven-thirty. We can at least dine in peace.”

Charlie followed this advice, forgetting to tell his company associates where he was going. They dined alone. And Charlie, who had been a great admirer of the prolific writer and his incisive pictures of the compromises and vicissitudes of the Victorian middle class, was deeply impressed with the poignant sympathy and the rich, robust humor of the man.

H. G. Wells has a quick judgment which lacks

patience toward slow democratic developments in progress. He is strikingly intolerant of modern education. His own strong personal convictions carry an impatience of the opinions or convictions of others. Charlie, no less impatient toward the bunglings of democracy, is more the artist, less the sociologist. Wells's dicta antagonized him, and he, usually so tolerant of another's ideas, was moved to render verdicts where merely opinions were indicated. It was an evening of "fire at will" and no quarter given, a forerunner of the vein of friendly antagonism which ran through their subsequent meetings.

Getting up the next morning completely out of sorts, Charlie made a sudden decision to escape from London.



Paris, Berlin, and London

CHARLIE, accompanied by Carl Robinson, left for Paris. Tom Harrington was left in London. The apartment at the Ritz was kept for their return, and six stenographers were installed under the direction of Harrington to handle the hundreds of letters pouring in for Charlie with every post.

Ill from the channel crossing to Calais, they arrived in Paris to find it raining. It did not matter to Charlie. He was in France. The crowds at the station shouting, "*Vive le Charlot! Bravo, Charlot!*" told him that his arrival had not been unheralded. He braved the avalanche of reporters and cameramen, and at last it was over. Now he could see Paris, meet Cami, the French cartoonist with whom he had built quite a friendship by a weird correspondence—Cami sending him occasional drawings, Charlie responding with "stills" from his various pictures. Charlie saw him far back in the crowd. They made a rush for each other, but when they met they were brought up standing. Cami had neglected to learn English, and Charlie knew not a word of French! They

laughed as they realized the situation. Language stood between them, and even pantomimists and cartoonists cannot chat face to face with drawings and pictures. They grasped one another's hands in mutual understanding. Charlie was borne off to the Claridge Hotel.

Dudley Field Malone, the New York lawyer who has tried some of the most famous cases in American legal history, and Waldo Frank, the writer, captured Charlie next day for luncheon. They promised him Paris by early morning, by late night.

With Frank he sat on a bench in the Champs Élysées at dawn and watched the heavy market wagons rumble by, the housewives and servants with the long loaves of bread unwrapped under their arms, the young girls and men walking briskly out to work. Paris was very beautiful in the soft natural light of the early day. Charlie gazed about him, deeply absorbed, striving for the *feeling* of Paris. He told himself he had got it. Gay and spontaneous, seeking to hide its war scars underneath song and laughter.

They strolled along a boulevard, passed a church. There an old woman slept on the steps, but, unlike the old women of London, she was not worn or haggard. There were in her face no ravages of drink. To Charlie, behind the half-smile of her sleep, she seemed to be saying, "Do I not live in Paris?"

Sir Philip Sassoon, whose mother was Aline de Rothschild, and who was confidential secretary to Lloyd George, Prime Minister of England, was in Paris. Enormously rich, hard working, and most intelligent, Sir Philip was a personable young man. He came to call upon Charlie, bringing with him Georges Carpentier, pugilistic idol of France. But here again reporters and photographers broke through the lines of the hotel and urged the three of them to pose for pictures and give interviews, which all of them did with as much grace as possible. Sir Philip and Carpentier left after the former had invited Charlie to come to his home near London upon his return from Germany.

Montmartre was the selection of Malone for Charlie's first excursion into a Paris night. They began at the Café Palais Royale. The tango was in its vogue, the music a dreamy cadence of monotonous, broken rhythm. Among the poets, sight-seers, students, cocottes, and flower vendors, Charlie descried Iris Tree, the English poet and actress, daughter of Beerbohm Tree.

"Marvelous!" was his exclamation. She was a picture in the gleaming tavern lights, her golden hair straight bobbed, her face and slender boyish figure that of a beautiful page boy of medieval times. She joined them for a drink. The three of them then got into Malone's car and bowled along the avenues and boulevards singing lustily the old songs of the music halls.

Another tavern was visited, because their car had suddenly refused to go. A pale youth came up and ordered wine for the party as his guests. Charlie inferred from his sardonic manner that he guessed his identity, but if this were true he kept it to himself. Charlie was glad. It was good to have fun, incognito.

The youth, named René Chedecal, they learned later, played the violin. Charlie recognized, or thought he recognized in his playing, surprising talent. He was enraptured. The sculpture of the boy's face, his eyes sad and haunted, the music gay and yearning and passionate, left him speechless with the wonder of genius breeding in strange and humble places. He rushed to the youth and grasped his hand. The returned pressure, the low-voiced "*Merci, Charlot,*" told him he *was* recognized, but their reception of him had been a blessed stroke of tact that none but those far removed from the herd could confer.

As they were leaving, the patron, old and white-bearded, approached with diffidence and asked that they sign his guest book, a curious jumble of the names of the obscure and the great. Charlie drew his hat and stick and boots, adding the inscription, "I'd rather be a gypsy than a movie man," and signed his name.

Waldo Frank appeared next day with Jacques Copeau, foremost French dramatist and Director of the Vieux Colombier Théâtre at the time. They

went to the circus. The sad-faced clown of the French circus fascinated him. There was the charm and approaching classicism of his own miming. He sat wondering how many in the vast audience were able to analyze the source of their laughter, the always underlying pathos of the clown. Out of the wracked agony of the deepest suffering of generations has come, always, the greatest genius for humor.

Charlie Chaplin has within him that sort of Latin grace which gives him kinship with the drama of sentiment. But had he not known instinctively the value of true expression, it would have availed him nothing. He had learned back in those days with the Fred Karno company that, fling his limbs about in no matter what frenzy of action, it came to nothing unless he could perfect the movements—or lack of movements—of the mask.

It was in cafe life that Charlie felt he would find the real Paris, not the stage set for tourists, not the fashionable cafe, but the casual one where artists and students came for their *apéritif*, their coffee, and stayed to engage in heated argument over this or that master of painting, the newest book, or to relax in the gaiety of their models or other feminine companions.

With Waldo Frank he set out for the *Quartier Latin*. The afternoon and evening were spent in drifting from one small cafe to another. Beneath

the chatter and drinking he felt that he touched briefly the soul of the *Quartier*. Convention, he decided, had nothing to do with art. The lifted eyebrow, the tolerant smile of fashionable Paris, had no power to break the rhythm of creation flowing from the pens, the brushes of these impetuous scamps, into the drawing rooms, the galleries of Paris, of the world, and eventually into immortality.

Charlie and Carl Robinson proceeded on to Germany.

The Chaplin films since the *contretemps* of *Shoulder Arms*, that delightful satire upon all wars which had grossly offended the Germans, were practically unknown in Germany. In this picture, which was banned from the country after the first showing, it will be remembered that Charlie, as a soldier of the Allies, was captured by the enemy, the Germans. He escaped from the wire stockade and, knocking out the Kaiser's chauffeur, donned his uniform and by himself captured the Kaiser! He drove him protesting and struggling straight into the Allied lines and into the clutches of the hated poilus, doughboys, and tommies, as he thought, but actually into the German trenches.

Syd Chaplin had played the brief role of the Kaiser, also that of an officer who arrested Charlie and hustled him out of the enemy's clutches to

save his life. Henry Bergeman, the stout, jovial host of Henry's in Hollywood Boulevard, near Vine, the cafe for so many years the rendezvous for movie folk, played the part of von Hindenburg; Jack Wilson, the Crown Prince Wilhelm. The Germans had thought the picture *Shoulder Arms* unfunny!

When Charlie arrived in Berlin in the autumn of 1921 and found one city in which he could wander about at will, unrecognized and unlauded, he was at first immensely relieved, then astounded, and finally annoyed. Where were the cries of "Charlie!" Where were the flattering cordons of police to protect him from the often rough but good-natured enthusiasm of the crowds? There *were* no crowds.

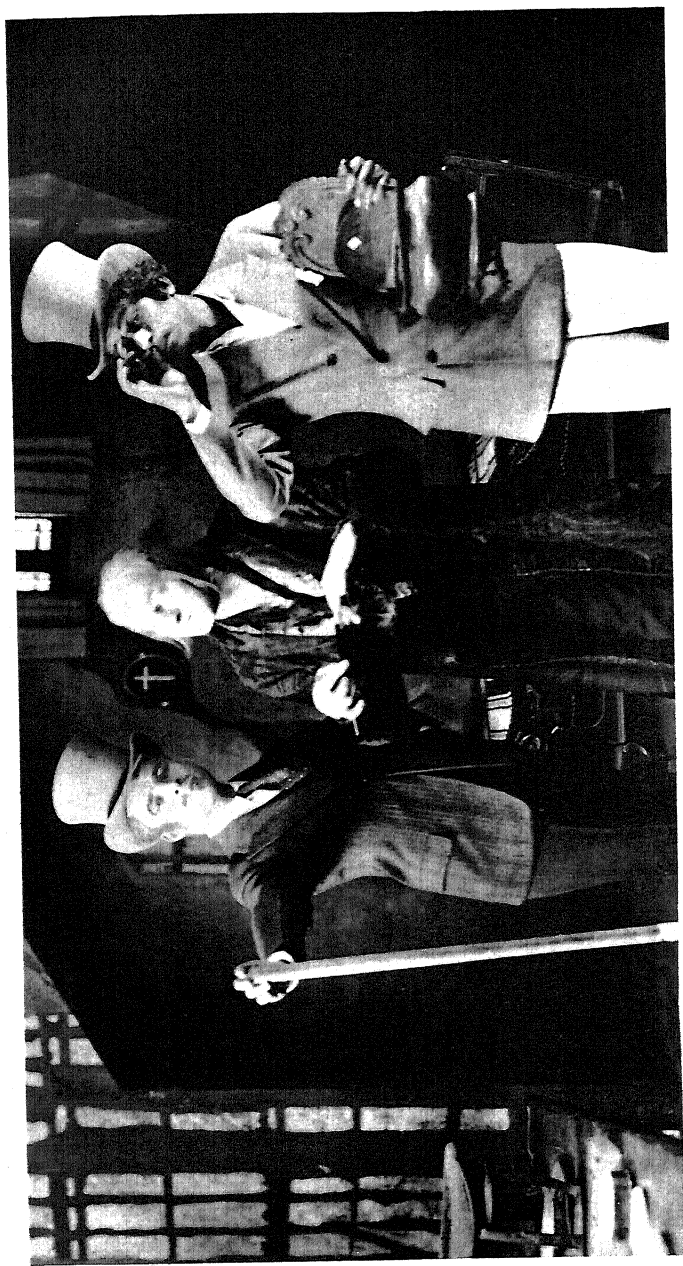
After a few days of wandering about the city unheeded, he demanded of Robinson that he seek out some place where he could at least meet some of the stage and screen people of Berlin. Robinson learned from the porter of the Adlon, where they were staying, that the Palais Hemroth was the smart gathering place for theatrical people as well as for those of fashion. Surely the habitués of the Hemroth would recognize him.

The master of ceremonies, however, showed no interest in the little chap who came in with his tall companion and demanded a good table. Charlie and Robinson were not in evening dress, and in Berlin, at the time, that stamped them obscure

tourists. It was evident that the manager considered them nothing that would affect his future. They were shown to a back table and left to their own devices.

Charlie was now exceedingly nettled. He looked about him at the dazzling brilliance of the club. The room was lavishly ostentatious, paneled in gold leaf, the hangings of satin and velvet in deep red, the favorite color scheme of the old order in Germany when they wished to express the ultra in luxury. The champagne buckets were of gold plate and the "silver" on the tables, also. The waiters were dressed in the livery of royal servants—knee breeches of black satin, white silk stockings, buckled shoes, red velvet tail coats, and frills at neck and wrists. Champagne corks were popping; an excellent orchestra was playing the jazz melodies of the day; the red-shaded lamps threw a soft glamorous light over the whole.

No one seemed aware of their existence save the waiter who brought their champagne. One was not asked whether he would have champagne at the Hemroth; it was brought as often as deemed fit by the waiter, and one liked it. And paid for it. Charlie and Robinson sipped a glass or two, then rose to go, when they heard "Charlie!" called out with some gusto from across the room. Charlie's mouth dropped open. It was Al Kaufmann, manager of the Famous Players-Lasky Company in Berlin.



Charlie, John Barrymore, and Douglas Fairbanks doing an original scene for their own amusement. Barrymore is in make-up for *Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, in which he was starring for United Artists at the 'time.



Pola Negri.

"Come over to our table," shouted Kaufmann. "Pola Negri wants to meet you!" The Berliners stared in amazement at the effrontery of those astonishing *Amerikanischers*. Charlie made his way in some embarrassment through the narrow winding lanes among the tables, vaguely wondering where he had heard the name Pola Negri. Oh, of course, the Polish stage star of several recent hits in Berlin.

Kaufmann's party was a large one of studio stars and representatives of various American companies in Europe. Charlie was warmly received and placed at table next to Pola, whose English—hurriedly acquired in a stage whisper from Kaufmann for the occasion—consisted of "Jazz Boy Charlie!" repeated again and again as they clinked their glasses. The Germans in the cafe watched with puzzled frowns the loud acclaim accorded the slight little chap whom they tried vainly to recall to memory.

Charlie, inclined to dark-eyed, exotic types of women, liked Pola immediately. His own words best express his impressions of the actress. "Pola Negri is really beautiful," he writes. "She is Polish and true to type. Beautiful jet-black hair; white, even teeth and wonderful coloring. She is the centre of attraction in Berlin. I am introduced. What a voice she has! A soft mellow quality with charming inflections."

He saw Pola only twice after this before return-

ing to Paris, thence to London. But he learned that she would be in Hollywood when he returned to America. She had signed a contract with Paramount Pictures, the executives of which company were to refer to her always as "The Polish Situation" because of her volatile moods and excess of temperament. Charlie assured her he would secure valuable advance publicity for her, which promise he kept. It was only necessary to release to the press his opinions of Pola and accounts of their meeting.

Back in London once more, Charlie attended the garden party in his honor at the country seat of Sir Philip Sassoon in Kent. He had flown from Le Bourget Field in Paris and had been landed by special dispensation at Lympe, in Kent, to avoid the crowds awaiting the plane and himself in London.

Charlie was asked by Sir Philip to stay over for a ceremonial next day in the village school, at which a memorial to the young men of the village who had fallen in battle was to be unveiled. He was afraid that his presence might act as a counter-attraction and spoil the solemnity of the occasion, but he hesitated to say as much to Sir Philip. When he did voice a mild reluctance, his host brushed it aside, assured him that the villagers would be disappointed if they did not get a glimpse of him.

They drove to the school. The streets and lanes

were crowded along their way. Shouts of "Hurrah for Charlie" filled the air. It did not take any psychic to infer that the unveiling was of secondary import to the crowd. Charlie suffered keenly, feeling himself an incongruity in the spirit of the day. The enthusiasm of his reception was in complete discord with reverence for the dead. He wished heartily he had not come.

Somehow the ceremony was got through, and Charlie went with Sir Philip to the Star and Garter Hospital to visit the wounded still billeted there three years after the war had ended. The sheer tragedy of the hopelessly and permanently wounded, the ghastly suffering borne cheerfully, sent his spirits further down.

An invitation came from H. G. Wells for a week end at his country home, Easton Glebe, in Essex, near Warwick Castle. This incursion into the family life of a group of individualists as striking as the Wellses was a heartening experience, though he was still dogged by a consciousness of his lack of education. Emerging from the seven years' grind of making pictures, he must be content in his quest for exploring the world of other minds with the bits garnered through the fog of his own self-consciousness.

Charlie felt no more at ease with his host than he had on their previous meeting. Blond, stocky, with drooping cavalry moustache, Wells was in the habit of communing with himself in little snorts,

his bright blue beady glance darting here and there. He allowed his hearers to say a word or two and then with extraordinary conversational agility, suppressed them either with a flat negative or a lightning flash to a fresh course of discussion. No one could resist his sincerity or his vital charm, but there could be no exchange of ideas.

Mrs. Wells was cordial and charming. Their son Charles, whom Charlie dubbed Junior, was immediately Charlie's friend. Mr. Wells took him to inspect his workshop in the process of being newly decorated after serving as birthplace for the *Outline of History*. There they looked at the old desk, paintings done by both Wells and his wife around the fireplace, and a tapestry, of which he was very proud, woven by Wells's mother. The furniture was sparse but good, solid English cottage. Books lining the walls, deep soft carpets, and comfortable armchairs made it a delightful place in which to work.

Charlie was amused during luncheon at the profound, analytical discussion between Wells and his son, of the sting of a wasp, one of the creatures buzzing over their heads. They were lunching on the terrace. Charlie suspected Wells of playing up to Junior; it was evident that he was proud of his son.

St. John Ervine, author of *John Ferguson*, came in during the afternoon. The possibility of syn-

chronizing the voice with motion pictures came into the conversation. Ervine was frankly interested at the prospect; Charlie heatedly contended that it was as absurd as painting statuary, rouging marble cheeks. Pictures were, he maintained, and should remain, solely a pantomimic art, leaving unspoken thoughts to be interpreted by the audience from gesture and expression. Charlie has been consistent in his belief; he has had, in the face of repeatedly predicted failure with the advent of talkies, the courage to continue his silent pictures.

Long walks about the countryside; a visit to Warwick Castle (the owners were not in residence); another visit to an eleventh-century church; an incredibly funny game of baseball taught the Wellses by Charlie and played by them all, and the visit was ended. It was a pleasant stay with the family, but Charlie left for London wondering whether Wells really wanted to know him, his inner life; or whether his desire was for Charlie Chaplin to know *him*. Perhaps, he reflected, Wells did not count mere entertainers important in the sociological scheme.

Charlie rejoined Robinson in London, and back to Paris they went for the premiere of *The Kid*. Upon his arrival at the Ritz, he found notes from Mary and Douglas Fairbanks, who were stopping at the Crillon. Charlie telephoned them demanding retaliation; they must show up at his picture

at the Trocadéro Theatre. He *would* have his revenge for his New York "vacation" from pictures. They both promised to come.

Paris had declared a holiday for the gala occasion of the first showing of *The Kid*. The proceeds from the premiere were to be given to the fund for devastated France.

Threading his way with difficulty through the mass of humanity which, that evening, blocked the streets leading to the theater, Charlie chuckled in anticipation of the effect of this upon the Fairbankses.

Ambassador Myron T. Herrick, the man who more than any American of his time, save perhaps Walter H. Page, loved France and understood her, was on hand that evening to greet Charlie. Ministers of the Cabinet and notables from all departments of government were present. M. Menard, representing President Millerand, who, through illness, was unable to attend; Jules Jusserand; le Marquis de Talleyrand-Périgord; le Marquis and la Marquise de Chambrun; the Loebes; the Vanderbilts; Prince George of Greece; Princess Xenia; Prince Christopher; Mme. Cécile Sorel; Elsa Maxwell—the list read like a combination of *Who's Who* and several Blue Books.

Charlie's box was draped with the American and the British flags. He entered his box to the *Marseillaise*; the applause was deafening and persistent.

He had autographed two hundred and fifty souvenir programmes that afternoon at the request of the committee. These had sold out quickly at one hundred francs each. More were brought to him, and, between flashes of camera lights and attentions of celebrities, he autographed these.

At last the lights went down; the picture was on. There was no whisper to disturb his concentration as he watched the fellow who was himself draw laughter, tears, an occasional spontaneous burst of applause from the great audience. All self-consciousness lost, he was alone, the artist looking upon his work and finding it good.

At the end of the film, a messenger appeared from the Ministers' box. Would Mr. Chaplin please come to their box to be decorated? This was a complete surprise to Charlie. He almost fell out of his own box. A wave of shyness, self-consciousness, engulfed him. He grew positively ill. What would he *say* in response to the speech somebody was sure to make? He had had no warning, no time to prepare anything gracious in either French or English. He cursed himself for ever attending the premiere, for being a motion-picture actor at all. But go he must. The messenger was waiting politely and patiently. There was nothing to do but follow.

With much the same feeling as a poor wretch going to a guillotine party given in his honor, Charlie stepped into the box of State. The Minister

of Public Instruction and Beaux Arts made a short speech, which was translated by someone. Charlie was too dazed to know. The decoration was pinned upon his coat, and Charlie, overcome, could only stammer, "*Merci*," which he used in both its French and English meanings.

The applause in the theater following this little ceremony was deafening and continuous. Charlie realized that it would not stop until he said something, so he turned, smiled, and said in English that it was a privilege for him to have a part in the rehabilitation of the devastated regions of France. His evident sincerity was rewarded by a tremendous ovation, and before he escaped from the box he was soundly kissed by several enthusiastic and appreciative gentlemen.

Spirited out of the theater through a side door after the lights were turned out and most of the crowd had dispersed, Charlie went to the Crillon with Cami, who was waiting at his car to congratulate him. Mary and Douglas had not braved the crowds of the premiere. *They* were on vacation. They were waiting for him at the hotel, however, and told him that General Pershing was in the next room, wished to meet him.

They joined the General, champagne was ordered, and until three in the morning they sat and talked of art and battles.

Charlie went back to his hotel feeling this the high point in his career. Had he not seen his own

greatest picture? And had he not been made by France an *Officier de l'Instruction Publique*?

Elsie de Wolfe, noted interior decorator and a no less noted personality, was hostess to Charlie next day at her home, the Villa Trianon at Versailles.

A dinner with Cami, Georges Carpentier, Henri Letellier, and an interpreter, that evening, and early to bed. There was a luncheon scheduled with Lloyd George in London for the next day.

Next morning Charlie boarded a plane and congratulated himself that if all went well he would be in London in ample time for the meeting with Lloyd George as arranged by Sassoon. But all did not go well. Before they had been up more than a few minutes, they were completely lost in a fog over the Channel. The pilot turned back and eventually made a forced landing on the French coast. There they stayed until the fog had lifted, a delay of two hours. Charlie was dismayed at the thought of keeping the Prime Minister waiting.

Arriving finally at the Croydon airdrome, Charlie was in an advanced stage of jitters. He caught sight, through the crowd jamming the field, of a large limousine about which the crowd was particularly dense. A lane from the airplane to the car was cleared, and the police held back the mob. They hustled him into the waiting car.

The driver threw the car into gear, deaf to Charlie's shouted insistence that they wait for Robinson lost somewhere in the mass. Charlie

became angry and a little mystified. These feelings grew into positive anxiety as he realized before very long that he was being taken not to the Ritz, but through unfamiliar streets. A kidnapping in England? Unheard of! They drew up before the Majestic Theatre in Clapham! He demanded to know the meaning of this impertinence. The imperturbable driver turned and, pulling off his moustache with all the flourish of a villain of melodrama, explained:

"I am Castleton Knight. You remember me. Some time ago you promised to visit my theater. My patrons were told and expected you. You didn't keep that promise. I promised them you'd be here today if I had to kidnap you. Please consider yourself kidnapped."

"But—but the police, the lane cleared to the car—I don't understand. How did you manage?"

"Oh, that was easy. I just got a more impressive-looking car than the one sent for you, and put on an act."

"You're good," Charlie admitted, amusement overcoming his annoyance. He admired Knight's strategy—and felt a bit guilty for having let him down before. It was too late anyway, he consoled himself, to hope to make the luncheon with Lloyd George. He chuckled as he pictured the furor at the Carlton when Robinson got there without him.

At the Majestic Theatre, Charlie made a speech and greeted the audience with great good humor.

They were wild with joy. They knew Charlie Chaplin would appear at few, if any, theaters in London. The manager of the Majestic was truly a wonderful man.

Mr. Knight drove him to the hotel but discreetly refused to go up to his rooms with him. "No, thanks, old man, I prefer to keep a whole skin, if you don't mind. Thanks and—cheerio!"

There *was* a to-do! Robinson, Harrington, all of the United Artist executives, had assembled in his rooms and were preparing to notify the police. When Charlie told them of his kidnapping they shouted with laughter. Castleton Knight was an excellent businessman, they agreed.

On the morrow Charlie and Harrington and Robinson were sailing from Southampton for home. Charlie had promised H. G. Wells to dine with him that night and meet Chaliapin, the great Russian baritone. In the confusion he had also promised his cousin Aubrey at least one evening before his departure. He telephoned Wells and explained his dilemma. Wells understood and released him from the engagement.

Aubrey called for Charlie in a taxicab about dusk. When getting into the cab, Charlie noticed a number of people standing in the murky shadows of a building across the street. He was immediately upset, visualized reporters waiting to pounce upon him and dramatize his visit with his humble kin. He said as much to Aubrey, who hastened to

calm his fears with the explanation that it was merely some friends of his, Aubrey's, who wanted very much to see Charlie but did not wish to annoy him. Charlie was ashamed, but grateful, for the delicacy of his own people, from whom apparently he had come a long way but, actually, only in the measure by which he had always been set apart from all his fellows. He insisted that Aubrey call them over; he wanted to meet them. Aubrey did so, and diffidently they approached and stammered responses to Charlie's remarks, offered their hands awkwardly. They were left standing tremulous, with a warm and heartened feeling that their Aubrey's cousin had not, after all, become a snob.

At the home of his cousin, Charlie suggested that they repair to Aubrey's public house which, out of deference to Charlie's new status, Aubrey had been trying to call a hotel. Aubrey demurred; he was a little shocked that Charlie, who could drink champagne with the "toffs" of London, should want to go to a pub in Bayswater. Charlie insisted. Aubrey weakened, finally gave in, and they departed for the saloon.

The place was clean and warm and redolent of the wine- and ale-soaked wood of generations. It was filled with regular customers, there for their stout or half-and-half before going home to supper after work.

The men eyed Charlie questioningly; none

seemed to recognize him. They merely stared at his well-cut suit and topcoat, knew that he did not belong.

Charlie felt stealing upon him a mood of recklessness, amplified, no doubt, by the wine he had drunk and the sweeping realization of "There, but for the grace of talent, go I." With a sweep of his arm he invited them all to the bar for a drink, announced that he was Charlie Chaplin, cousin to Aubrey, and that though he might have traveled far, he was still one of them, Charlie of Kennington.

The men frankly doubted his identity, eyed him resentfully, while Aubrey explained to a few that this *was* actually Charlie Chaplin. This could not be the man who shunned crowds, the solitary genius who had been catapulted beyond their ken. Perhaps it was one of old Aubrey's jokes. *They* would not be taken in.

At last they approached hesitantly and took their drinks, drawing away again in groups. They drank. They bade him a reserved goodnight when he left. Aubrey was frankly discomfited. He was also confused. The line of class is drawn finely in England, and often the greengrocer is more disturbed by the marriage of his daughter (who is in the chorus) to a titled man than is the family of the latter.

As to Charlie's vulgar behavior in the tavern, which he himself admits, the following from

George Jean Nathan is apt: "In every thoroughly charming and effective personality one finds a suggestion, however small, of the gutter. This trace of finished vulgarity is essential to a completely winning manner. The suavest and most highly polished man or woman becomes uninteresting save as he or she possesses it."

Back in the home of his cousin, after dinner, the family photograph album was brought out for Charlie's delectation. He was impressed by the pictures of his immediate ancestors, to which he had given little thought: a great-grandfather who had been a French general, some uncles who were prosperous cattle ranchers in South Africa. It pleased him, now that it was brought to his notice, that there were other career makers, besides impecunious tradesmen and music-hall actors, in the family. He experienced his first consciousness of pride in his family.

Charlie became momentarily interested in Aubrey's son, aged twelve. He seemed a bright boy, a fine, upstanding lad. He proposed educating him for the army, for ranching, something toward the trend of his forebears. Aubrey was touched but perhaps a little fearful, too. However, nothing came of it. With the prerogative of genius, Charlie soon forgot his cousin's family and their problems. He was too far removed from their world to entertain a real and lasting sympathy for them.

When Charlie, accompanied by Harrington and Robinson, boarded the train for Southampton next morning, there were, among the crowd at the station, old friends of his youth whom he had been too busy or too careless to see. He felt a twinge of remorse for his seeming indifference toward the familiar figures of his past who had in spirit shared his success. In their content at simply catching a glimpse of him as he left, he imagined no reproach but only an understanding of the onerous burden of being a celebrity; he imagined no jealousy, for he knew his Cockneys and their reluctance to break the barrier of class, but he knew that he should have made time to see them, visit with them. He was very sad.

There were cries of "Love to Alf and Amy"—Alfred Reeves and his wife. Charlie smiled down at them through tears. He shouted promises to come back the next summer. It was to be ten years before he saw London again.

At the boat in Southampton, Sonny Kelly was waiting to see him off. Sonny was, as always, matter-of-fact, but as Charlie stepped onto the gangplank, he slipped a parcel into his hand. He leaned over and whispered, "I thought you'd like this."

Charlie held the square, flat parcel in his hand. Without unwrapping it he knew what it was. A picture of Hetty! One of her latest. There was a lump in his throat; he looked at Sonny through

tears that would well up. "Thank you, Sonny. You're always kind." He turned away that Sonny might not see his remembered grief.

He stood watching the crowds waving to him from the dock. But with his mind's eye he saw his desk at home in Hollywood with Hetty's picture as it would stand, always, whatever women came or went. And he was going home.

Clare Sheridan

ON THE TRAIN from New York to Los Angeles, at Denver, Colorado, Charlie received a telegram from Abe Lehr in Hollywood. Lehr* was chief lieutenant and "no man" for Samuel Goldwyn. Most of the producers in Hollywood had, at the time, a staff of consistent "yes men." The great and only Goldwyn was different. He recognized, long ago, the value of sincere disagreement. Aided by Lehr's "no's" he has fought his way to an enviable position in the realm of unusual pictures, unusual first of all because, for each picture, Sam Goldwyn carves a bit from his own great heart.

Lehr is no mean personality himself. He was the son of the glove manufacturer for whom young Goldwyn first went to work. And as a stimulus to Goldwyn he has been invaluable.

Abe Lehr telegraphed Charlie telling him he had the one other free and untrammelled spirit who had struck Hollywood in many moons—Clare Sheridan. Clare was cousin to Winston Churchill

* Goldwyn started his business career as salesman for Abe Lehr's father in his glove factory. When he went into production of motion pictures he took Lehr's son with him.

and widow of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's grandson, Wilfred Sheridan, who had been killed in action in the World War in 1915. She was also a sculptress of note. Lehr invited Charlie to his home for dinner to meet Clare Sheridan.

Tom Harrington dispatched an answer to Lehr accepting the invitation. Charlie was always interested in meeting any woman of striking personality. He admired Clare Sheridan for her courage to defy the complacency of her immediate family and be an artist.

It was a group of four at the Lehr's, the host and hostess, and Clare and Charlie. The mutual interests of the two developed into a delightful and immediate friendship. They talked the same language. Clare had just returned from Russia, and they were both intensely interested in the Russian attempt to create an ideal from raw material, its initial inception under Kerensky and its development by Lenin.

Equally significant, both were agreed upon the importance of the never-ending exploration into the world of created beauty, art.

Each had the sixth sense of an artist, that intuitive ability to grasp an experience that he has never had and make it his; each the sensitive, instant comprehension of the other's intent. Each possessed to a nice degree the mystical sense of the absolute.

Charlie, a firm believer in the school of "The

world's my oyster," advised Clare with a firmness which surprised her; "Don't get lost on the path of propaganda. Live your life as an artist. The other goes on always."

Clare soon found that Charlie was not an avowed Communist as the press had tried to impress upon its American readers. He was, and is, sympathetic to its ideology. He has given large sums of money to the cause which he sincerely believes to be that of freedom. For freedom is to Charlie of paramount importance, and a country which is gradually but surely establishing an aristocracy of achievement by its creative workers cannot fail to hold his interest and support. He is an individualist, with all the artist's intolerance of stupidity and insincerity and narrow prejudice.

Clare Sheridan found in Charlie Chaplin, to her delight, a sincerity without affectation, an almost feminine intuition, his opinions arrived at by his own processes of thought and uncolored by popular acceptance or rejection.

During the evening, Clare found herself growing eager to make a portrait bust of Charlie. She had modeled Kemal Ataturk, Mussolini, Primo de Rivera, in clay to be cast in bronze; she had sculptured in marble Lord Oxford and Asquith for the Oxford Union. Lord Birkenhead and Count Keyserling had sat for their busts.

She was afraid to suggest to Charlie that he pose for her, catching glimpses of his shyness. So

she approached the subject indirectly, complaining of her difficulty in persuading American men to pose.

"They're so modest," she said. "They consider it a vanity to sit for a bust."

Charlie looked at her with sly humor. She felt at once that he had uncovered her strategy.

"I'm vain," he declared. "Thank God, I have no modesty."

It was settled that he was to pose for her.

Clare Sheridan left the Lehrs that evening convinced, she said later in her *American Diary*, that she had met a man with a great soul. She fancied she divined the reason for the universality of his art. If she could just capture that in his face, to be cast in bronze—that and the subconscious and driving search for happiness he held locked in his heart.

Charlie invited Clare and her young son Richard Brinsley Sheridan III to see *The Kid* next day at his studio. He was much interested in young Dick, who was seven and a curious mixture of the young English gentleman and the naïve, unconventional child. Charlie watched him throughout the picture, and when the moment came that the Kid was to be taken away from his stepfather (Charlie), Dick threw his arms about his mother's neck and sobbed, "Don't let them *do* it! I can't bear it. I *can't* look till the end." Charlie was visibly affected by the genuineness of the youngster's emotions;

he comforted him, assuring him it would come right in the end, but he was unable to resist tip-toeing to the small harmonium in the projection room and playing Chopin preludes that dripped from his fingers even as Dick's tears fell from his eyes.

Above all, Charlie was the artist who must draw the last drop of response from his audience, come what may.

The three of them lunched together at Charlie's home and later went for a long walk into the Hollywood hills, Dick scrambling nimbly up steep banks while Charlie and Clare walked round and up the gently sloping paths to the summit of the hills. They talked. Charlie explained his conclusions on the ultimate aims of the artist. "There must be no dreams of posterity," he declared, "no desire for admiration. There is only one end: to please one's inner self, to be able to look upon one's efforts and say, 'That is mine—my conception of what is beauty, mine the satisfaction that it is the best I can do with my present growth. It is good.' "

Clare reminded him that she was a mother, that she wanted her children someday to be proud of her. Charlie upbraided her for this attitude. "You should want them only to love you—to love you in a perfectly primitive, animal way. To love you because you are their mother, not for what you may do. They must love you even if you are wrong."

"But if I felt I had nothing to work *for*," she protested, "no end, no aim of continuity, only my own satisfaction, I should feel inclined to suicide."

Charlie stopped dead in his tracks, horrified. "My God! How can you say that?" he exclaimed. "How could anyone with such vitality as yours entertain, even for a moment, the thought of suicide?" He threw his arms wide to the horizon. "It's all so beautiful!" he cried, "and it's all mine." Immediately he laughed at his own seriousness and at Clare's.

Back at the house Charlie asked Dick if he would like to stay for tea. "Yes, Charlie," came the prompt reply, "and all night, too. D'you know, Charlie, I think you're quite the funniest and nicest man I know," he added.

Charlie was properly touched by this but forced a compromise by driving them home and talking to Dick all the way. The boy was left at the Hollywood Hotel with his nurse, and Charlie and Clare went to dine at Cocoanut Grove, the gay spot of the Ambassador Hotel. There, in a huge room, under synthetic palm trees, with the blare of jazz, drinking and dancing going on about them, Charlie told Clare of his childhood. Simply, yet with eloquent words, he painted the stark realism of his suffering—and with a complete detachment that robbed it of the stigma of self-pity. It was the story of a child of sorrows who had taught a whole world to laugh.

Work started on the bust of Charlie and went on apace. Early each morning Clare would go over to his house in Beachwood Drive and work, with brief intervals for rest and food for both of them, the whole day through.

Charlie, in pyjamas and dressing gown which he changed occasionally to match his mood, leaving the room in purple and black to reappear in a blaze of orange and primrose, posed patiently, for him. True, he talked volubly, throwing back his head, flinging out his hands. Clare let him be. This was the way to catch the nuances of the whole man, she knew.

As an outlet for his nervous energy he would occasionally leap off the revolving stand, grab up a violin which was strung in reverse for his left-handed playing, and walk slowly up and down the room playing improvisations that might have been taken for the polished work of masters of composition had not the mood changed them abruptly from melancholy to a gay rollicking satire of anastrophe.

Another time he would turn on the gramophone and with all of the grace and temperament of a Stokowski, wield an imaginary baton to an invisible orchestra.

Claire Windsor, to whom Charlie was reported engaged, was in and out during the day, but did not interfere in the work or the long talks they enjoyed. Charlie confided that he, as a lonely

youth in London and on the vaudeville circuit in America, even in his first days in Hollywood, had longed to know people, but now that he knew so many, he was lonelier than ever. "When one is young and undeveloped," he said, "one looks up to people as having some mysterious bigness, and he wants to know those people and their thoughts, but as he, himself, grows he learns the fallacy of this. All artists are lonely; it is useless to expect anything else, it is inevitable."

Feverishly for three days Clare worked on the bust, completing it within this time. She realized how fortunate she was to have captured something of his restlessness, something of his hunger. She was fortunate also in having been able to ensnare him immediately upon his return from Europe before he had become engulfed in work. And a man in pyjamas and dressing gown does not jump into his car and dash off somewhere else.

It had not been easy to do, this face of the man of so many moods. So much of subtlety, so much of varying and conflicting passions; the self-chastisement of unbridled will, the ascent from the childlike to the higher stage, the development of the improviser into the master of form—all this must be transmuted to the clay by the knowing fingers of the sculptress. She looked upon her work at the end of the third day and called it good. Did Charlie like it?

He said, "I wish this were not me, so that I could

admire it as I please. I find him very interesting, this fellow you have made." And then, studying it with half-closed eyes, he launched into an astonishing speech. "It might be the head of a criminal, mightn't it? Criminals, you know, and artists are psychologically akin,* both have a burning flame of impulse, a vision, a deep sense of unlawfulness."

Charlie was in no hurry to get back to work. Clare Sheridan's many-faceted personality interested him. It was May, and the outdoors called the Englishman. They decided to go on a camping trip. Charlie telephoned Kono and asked him to get things ready.

Tents and all the paraphernalia of camping, including food for two weeks, were hurriedly got together.

"You can do the cooking," Charlie informed Clare.

"Yes? I can't boil an egg without reflecting discredit on its progenitor."

"Well, you ought to be ashamed," Charlie retorted in mock reproof. "We'll take along the cook."

They set off, a merry cavalcade, to find a suitable location away from the crowded beaches. Clare, young Dick, and Charlie were driven by Kono in the large car; the cook and Mexican driver

* Somerset Maugham in *The Summing Up* says, "It is only the artist, and maybe the criminal, who can make his own [life]."

with the camping equipment followed in a smaller one.

It was Sunday. They found to their dismay, after starting, that the road up the coast through Santa Monica to Santa Barbara was humming with cars, most of them filled with families racing—somewhere—not to be alone but with crowds of other families which jam the beaches about Los Angeles on week ends. On and on they sped, never leaving the crowds until Clare, becoming quite cross with the American tendency of herding, accused Charlie of lack of foresight in not having had a spot located for them before they started. Charlie mopped his brow. "Shut up," he snapped, with the privilege of the camaraderie they enjoyed.

"Surely there must be *some* place, some lovely peaceful spot unmarred by people?" she persisted.

"No, if it is at all accessible, someone will have discovered it," he said.

"Then," said Clare, "we must content ourselves with a horrid place no one else wants."

Charlie did not reply, merely instructed Kono to drive on. Daylight was fading.

At long last, between Ventura and Oxnard, they spied a clump of trees by the sea. They plunged off the paved road and into sand for a mile or two and brought up before a sign: "Private Property—No Trespassing—No Camping—No Hunting." They looked at the tall eucalyptus trees, dark plumes against the reddened sky.

"There!" exclaimed Charlie triumphantly, looking as pleased as a small boy who has found the key to the jam closet. "There is our home for a while!"

"B-but the sign," Clare reminded him. He brushed this aside.

The spot was perfect, everything they had hoped for but not dared to expect. The sun sank suddenly out of sight. Darkness came upon them, as it does in California, like a tired old man going quickly to bed—instead of the reluctant drawing away of a child, the twilight interim of the North and East. The brief afterglow sent a warm radiance over the beach and sky and sea. The wood was fragrant with scent of eucalyptus trees mingled with the salt tang of the sea, the sand a white carpet of fine silt beneath their feet.

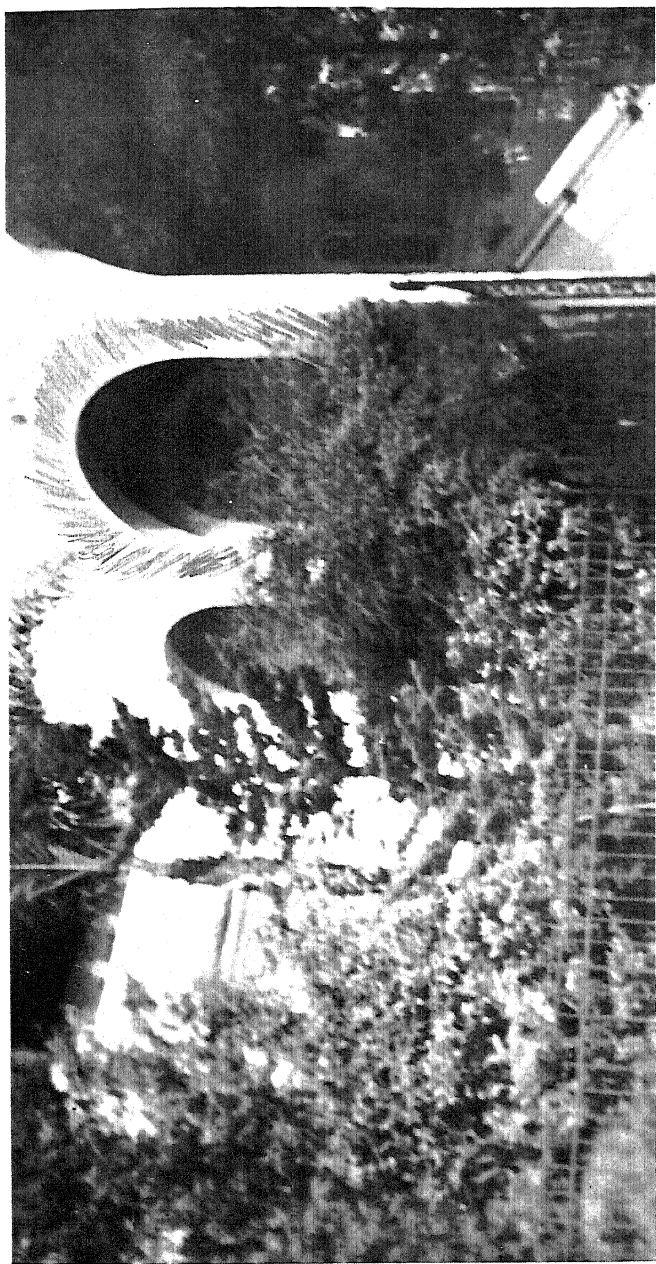
Throwing off their shoes and stockings, Clare and Charlie and Dick ran, with whoops of joy, down to the surf which was breaking in little crimson and indigo waves upon the shore. They stopped breathless before the wonder of it all.

Kono had been dispatched (as an afterthought) to the farmhouse above to ask for permission to make camp. The Japanese cook and the Mexican driver, chattering harmoniously, set about pitching five tents, hanging colored lanterns among the trees, and building two campfires, one by the cook tent, the other a "drawing-room" fire a short distance away for Charlie and his guests.

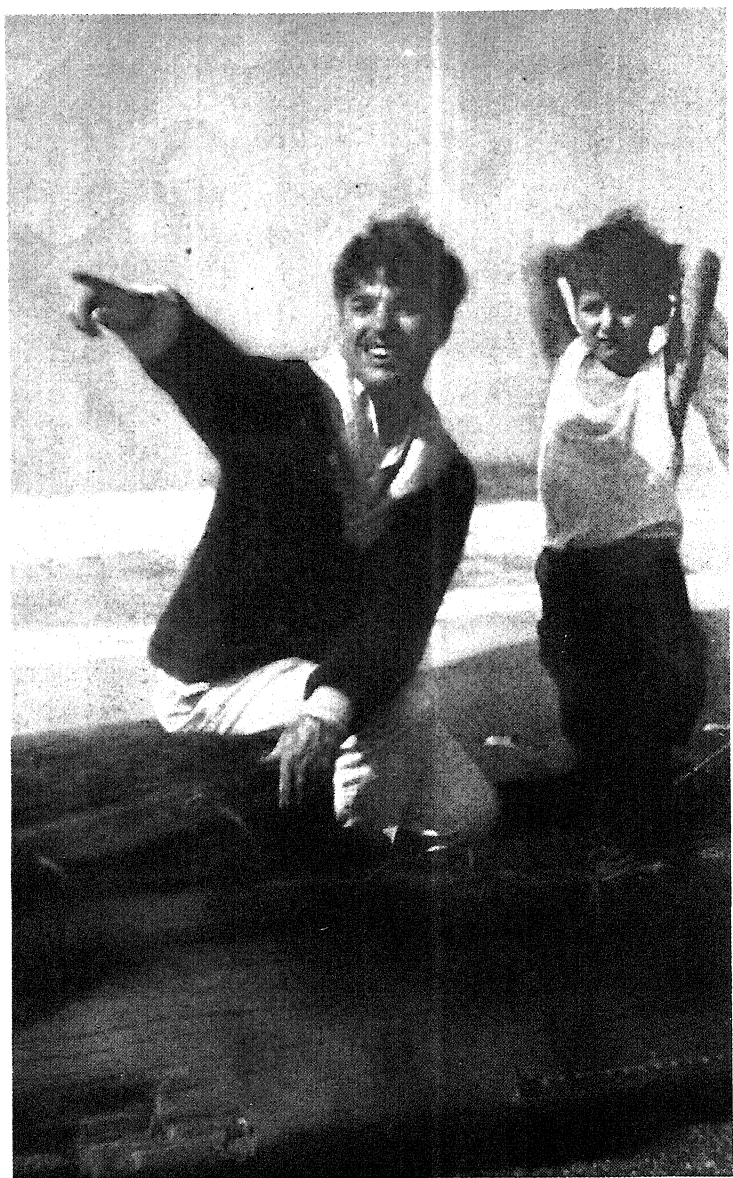
Kono returned and announced that Charlie's name had opened the way; it was as if the forbidding sign were obliterated. They were to remain as long as they liked.

After a delicious dinner upon which all of them had fallen with keen appetites, young Dick was sent off to bed, into the tent made ready for him and his mother. Clare and Charlie settled down cross-legged before the fire that was burned down by now and fragrant with the scent of eucalyptus leaves thrown on by the thoughtful Kono. A half-moon rose. The naked shining trunks of the trees cast slender black shadows on the white sand. The cries of night birds were shrill and sweet against the booming rhythm of the waves beating against the shore. Clare looked at Charlie huddled before the fire, an elfin creature with gleaming eyes and tousled hair. She shook off her impatience with herself for neglecting to bring her modeling tools. Here in this flickering light, the mystery of night sounds, she could catch the sense of him. And then emerging from the warm shadows of their isolation there came the confused anguish for the harmonies they both, as artists, sought. Charlie looked up at her. He said, "Why are we here, Clare? What is the meaning of it all?"

Clare shook her head wordlessly. Her mind warned her of the futility of capitulation to his eternal seeking—and hers. And yet a profound emotion, primal as the trees and rocks about them,



Charlie's house in Beachwood Drive, in which he entertained Clare Sheridan.



Charlie weaves fanciful stories of the wrecked hull on the beach and the lands it has touched, for young Dick Sheridan, descendant of Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

held them both, she knew; an obscure agitation of hitherto unrecognized impulse—toward one another. She grew frightened of herself, and then Dick, who, torn by the excitement of the day, was unable to get to sleep, emerged wide-eyed and flushed from the tent and came up to Clare. She took the small boy's hand in hers. Deliberately she broke the moment. "Good night, dear Charlie," she said with soft finality and followed her son into their tent.

Like three happy, primitive children the three of them passed the days following, joyous in their seclusion. Barefooted they catapulted headfirst down the steep slopes of the sand dunes, Charlie to the delight of Clare who pointed it out to Dick, bringing to his dives the grace of a dancer. He danced for them with wild abandon, danced in imitation of Nijinski but putting into each *pas seul* the peculiar intensity of combined tragedy and comedy with which every separate expression of his art is marked.

One day he found a wrecked boat far down the beach, a shell of grey, abandoned driftwood. Inviting young Dick to sit beside him on its upturned hull, he wove fanciful stories of the lands it had touched and the peoples it had seen, holding the small boy enthralled for hours.

Charlie, with a rifle, wounded a duck, and it flopped about on the sand. He was in a panic. Turning his face away from its agony of thrash-

ing, he wailed to Clare, "You'll have to kill it. I can't! I simply can't! My God, why was I such a brute?"

Clare, hardier by nature, grabbed an oar and performed the distasteful task. Charlie, relieved that the fowl was out of pain and at peace, forgot it.

(He has an unreasoning fear of physical pain, not through any experience but from imagination. He has been singularly free from disease and pain, having built up by long walks in the open a resistance to the common ailments of mankind.)

Charlie was happy in these days, Clare knew. And she was grateful for the sanity of the moment when she had put down his impulse—and hers—leaving him to draw peace from the miraculous world of his own in which he needed no other. Drawn from this short space from out life, together, they were yet apart, each strongly individual, each free now of the remembrance, at best, of an evanescent joy.

On the seventh day their paradise was spoiled, as paradises inevitably are. The secret of Charlie's presence had been whispered about among the scattered families of the district. Hordes of children appeared seemingly out of nowhere, piling out of ramshackle cars piloted by sheepish elders. They surrounded Charlie, who instantly reverted to the painful self-consciousness of his enforced contact with people. Charlie talked with them, for

he could never be harsh with children, then disappeared alone over the dunes.

Two reporters climbed out of a car that had just driven up and went in search of him. They had not been able to find him at his home upon the first night of his return to Hollywood.

He came back between them, his head hanging in dejection. The price of advertising, incidental to the career of an actor, must be paid. The beauty and peace of their holiday were shattered.

They broke camp and returned to town.

That evening, Clare and Charlie sat on the verandah of his home and watched the lights below that twinkled a jeweled carpet to the distant sea. Constraint fastened upon them. Instead of a tousle-headed elfin figure, Clare saw a smooth-haired young man, guarded in his manner; Charlie saw a sophisticated woman of the world, whose everyday association from her childhood had been with princesses and statesmen and great writers. Each faced a stranger.

"What is the matter with us?" Clare asked fretfully.

"The matter is," Charlie replied with a superior smile, "that we no longer know each other."

Next day Charlie saw Clare and Dick off at the station. They were going to New York.

He returned to his home engulfed in a gloomy conviction of the futility of expecting an unalloyed companionship of the spirit, the hopelessness of

any attempt to escape the consequences of being.

It was a year before Charlie could have the clay portrait Clare Sheridan had made of him cast into bronze and placed on a pedestal in his living room.

And Clare, conscious of their incongruity of physical height (she is fully six inches taller than he), has written in her autobiography, *The Naked Truth*, "Dear Charlie, how funny it would have been if. . . And on the whole not so unsuitable but . . ." (the dots are hers).

Pola Negri and Carlotta

CHARLIE LEARNED that Pola Negri was on her way to Hollywood. He described his meeting with her in Germany once more to the press, and there was great ballyhoo over the new star to shine in Hollywood. For Charlie there was a pleasant expectancy in the air which had something to do with Pola.

Meanwhile, Lila Lee, Claire Windsor, and Peggy Joyce were constant and merely friendly visitors to the Moorish atrocity in Beachwood Drive, Hollywood, which Charlie had leased and which he called home. The delectable Peggy was the most temperamental of these guests. On her whirlwind visits of a day, two days, and a week end, as the impulse struck her, she was loud in her denunciation of Charlie's house as a "bachelor's den." "It smells terrible," she was wont to wail, and, grabbing Charlie's *Mitsuko* (by Guerlain) from his dresser, would prance about like a priestess of old, sprinkling the precious drops of perfume on rugs and upholstery, drapes and cushions, with fine disregard for the spots she left in her wake. Kono would ruefully contemplate the empty bottle of *Mitsuko*

and take himself off to a shop for another bottle before Charlie should find it empty.

Pola arrived. She was grateful to Charlie for his interest in her career, the nice things he had said about her in print. Her gratitude grew into infatuation of Slavic intensity. Charlie showered attentions upon her. Her marriage to her husband, a Polish count, was dissolved. Before many weeks, the engagement of the new, exotic star and Charlie Chaplin was announced.

Charlie bought an entire hill in the lower mountains above the estates of the millionaires and picture stars in Beverly Hills. It was, he announced, the site of his new home, his and Pola's. Miss Negri wanted trees; large ones would have to be uprooted somewhere and replanted, as is the custom among Southern Californians to whom money is no object. Charlie was a little hazy about the trees, so Pola wrote a check for approximately seven thousand dollars for great shade trees of eucalyptus and live oak from a local nursery. They were the nucleus of landscaping the bare hill into a private park.

Pola reveled in the excitement among the picture colony over their engagement. She, never hampered by inhibitions, dramatized it, basking in the resultant publicity. Lyrics of praise, some of them embarrassingly intimate to Charlie, were sung by the volatile Polish star, to interviewers and even a few in magazines over her own signature. It

was obvious to the whole colony that Pola and Charlie were in the heat of a violent infatuation. Those who knew them best merely hoped the flame would burn itself out before there were fireworks—before the disastrous culmination of marriage.

And then came the incident of the girl from Mexico for which no one, save the girl herself, was to blame.

Carlotta—so shall she be called, mainly because that is not her name—was the headstrong, over-romantic daughter of a noted Mexican general, who had achieved his rank before the military title became an opprobrium, of old and respected lineage. Running away from her home in Mexico and crossing the border in some strategic manner never quite explained, without formality of passport, she came to Los Angeles. Booking a room at the Alexandria Hotel, at that time the largest downtown hotel in Los Angeles, she proceeded directly to the Chaplin studios in La Brea Avenue and demanded to see Mr. Chaplin. He was, she announced to all and sundry stragglers about the gates and to the office secretary, the object of her unceremonious trip, and of her affections.

Carlotta explained to Kono, who had become Charlie's personal buffer by this time, that she *must* meet Mr. Chaplin. She was, she said, in love with his art. Kono was tactful but firm. He was so sorry, but Mr. Chaplin was working on a story and could stop for no one. However, he assured

her, he would tell him of Miss ——'s admiration of his art, and he was quite sure it would please him. He presented her with two pictures of Charlie and sent her, as he thought, on her way.

There were many reasons why Kono decided not to take Carlotta in to meet Charlie. He was having his troubles with the fiery Pola at the time, and he welcomed no addition of a Mexican volcano to the already overloaded emotional upheaval. Besides, it was obvious that the girl was under age, and, of course, she was Latin; so he congratulated himself upon his own diplomacy.

Instead of returning to her hotel, Carlotta hunted around in front of the studio until she found a taxi driver who knew where the Chaplin ménage was. She appeared at the house and told the butler, "Mr. Kono told me to come here and wait for Mr. Chaplin." The butler, always on guard, smelled a mouse. They were not in the habit of sending beautiful young girls from the studio to wait for Mr. Chaplin. He telephoned Kono to confirm his suspicions. Turning away from the telephone, he asked Carlotta to leave.

The girl grew hysterical. She would give him anything. He *must* let her wait. She offered him a ring containing a six-carat diamond of dazzling whiteness. He refused to accept it, and she slipped it from her finger and dropped it into his pocket. He returned the ring and insisted that she go before Mr. Chaplin's return. She reluctantly left,

giving no warning of what she intended to do that evening.

As soon as he had finished his dinner, Kono, acting upon a premonition that they had not seen the last of Carlotta, drove to the house. As he came in he heard voices in the dining room. Crossing the living room, he saw to his great relief that all was as it should be. Pola and Dr. Cecil Reynolds* and Mrs. Reynolds with Charlie were lingering over their dessert and coffee, quite unaware of Kono's apprehensions.

Quietly Kono started out through the hall, when again something told him all was not right. Upbraiding himself for an overwrought fool, he turned and slipped softly up the stairs and into Charlie's bedroom. As he snapped on a light, a figure in the bed jerked the covers up over its head before he could make out who it was. He knew the worst, however, even before he had turned to see clothes, a woman's, flung on a chair.

He hurried downstairs and demanded of the butler a guest list for the evening. "Why—why, nobody—just the three you see in the dining room," said the mystified butler. Kono ran upstairs once more and yanked the bedcovers down, disclosing—Carlotta!

"Put your clothes on and get out as fast as you

* Dr. Reynolds, a graduate of Royal Physicians and Surgeons of England, noted brain specialist in the film colony (where the proportion of material to work upon, it is held by some unkind critics, is exceedingly small), amateur actor, and brilliant conversationalist, is one of Charlie's friends of longest standing.

can," he commanded. Carlotta was not inclined to obey this order, however, and only clung more tightly to the bedclothes.

Here was a situation, innocent in actuality, which might easily develop into scandal, adverse publicity. Kono decided to try strategy where authority had failed.

"If you'll put on your clothes and go down the back stairs and out of the house, you can come to the front door and ring the bell, and I'll tell the butler to admit you. I'll see that you have a nice visit with Mr. Chaplin," he promised. "Now, hurry!"

Carlotta, after a moment's hesitation, was apparently mollified. She slipped into her clothes, while Kono, nothing loath, watched her dress. She followed him down the back stairs and out through the kitchen door.

Kono called Charlie aside and explained the drama of the afternoon and evening to him. Charlie, his interest piqued, agreed readily that the only thing to do was to see her.

Within a few minutes the front doorbell rang, and Carlotta, the picture of innocence, was admitted. Kono introduced her to the party of four, but she, obviously, had eyes only for Charlie, hardly deigning a nod and glance to the others. Pola, though she knew nothing of what had gone before, was instinctively hostile to any attractive female who visited Charlie. Her angry glances in Kono's

direction told him she suspected him of a deep-dyed plot to take Charlie away from her. Kono shrugged it off.

Carlotta spoke excellent English with an attractive accent; she was at ease in the group, her poise was evident. And unlike most sheltered Mexican girls of her class, she had a grasp of the world about her, was a good conversationalist. Charlie was delighted with her.

It was well after midnight when he suggested that Kono drive her back to her hotel. She thanked Charlie graciously for a nice evening and devoured him with her eyes while Pola seethed and Dr. Reynolds tried to conceal his huge amusement at the whole thing.

Kono had dismissed Carlotta from his mind with the thought that she must be well on her way back to Mexico, when next morning the telephone rang. It was Charlie's butler. He had just seen Carlotta get up from an improvised bed of newspapers! Under a large tree in the back garden! She had left the grounds, he added. Another call in midmorning informed Kono that Carlotta was at the house with a big bouquet for Charlie. This was becoming a nuisance, Kono assured himself between mild Japanese curses. He jumped into his car and went to the scene of what was assuming the proportions of an endurance contest.

Carlotta greeted him, airily social in manner, when he arrived and told him she was leaving that

day for Mexico but she wanted Mr. Chaplin to have these flowers in appreciation of his hospitality. Then having allayed his fears, she questioned him about Pola Negri. Was she engaged to Charlie? Was Charlie really in love with her? Were they going to be married?

Kono assured her that they were going to be married in the near future. As to what their emotions concerning each other were, he could not hope to surmise, he added discreetly.

Carlotta's eyes blazed with jealousy. Her small twisting fingers gave the stamp of truth to the fire in her eyes. "I hate her!" she exclaimed. "I will keel her some day," she added. "Now I must to go home."

Kono agreed with her that this nonsensical pursuit of Charlie must end.

He drove her to the corner of Western and Hollywood Boulevard, there putting her into a taxicab. Giving the driver three dollars, he instructed him to take her to the Alexandria Hotel and not to stop for anything but signal lights in between. Carlotta bade Kono good-by with many protestations of friendship and gratitude, and the taxi drove away. Whew! He was glad the incident was closed. Ticklish business, this Latin temperament. Well, anyway, she was safely out of the way, now.

He had scarcely reached the studio and got down to work when the telephone rang and the butler

informed him gleefully that Carlotta was hanging about the house, in front. Kono failed to appreciate the butler's mirth, warned him sharply that it would cost him his job if she got into the house. He would better, he added, lock all the doors. Hanging up the receiver, Kono reflected ruefully upon the powerlessness of three dollars as against a Mexican beauty's wiles with taxi drivers.

Nervous and jumpy, Kono tried to settle down to work. But about five o'clock in the afternoon he went to Charlie and advised him strongly against going home that night for dinner. Charlie agreed reluctantly to dine out. Kono called the house about seven and was told that Carlotta had retired from the siege. Again he allowed himself the luxury of a sigh of relief.

All was serene on the Chaplin front next day—no sign of the glamorous Carlotta—so Charlie decided to dine at home. Pola and the Reynoldses were to dine with him.

At about eight that evening Kono drove up to the house. He was taking no chances of a repetition of the contretemps of the night before. Little did he know that it would not be a repetition: it would be a vastly improved exhibition of technique.

The first object that met his eye as he drew up in front of the driveway gates was Carlotta, staggering about in a most peculiar manner in the driveway. He jumped out of his car and rushed toward her. She swayed and fell to the pavement.

There was a bright moon, and from its light Kono could see dark rivulets on the pavement. Blood! So they were going to have a scandal after all, in spite of everything!

Bending over the prostrate form of the girl, he felt her hands. Icy cold! He felt for her heart-beat, could not distinguish any. Quickly summoning the chauffeur, the two of them carried her into the laundry room at the back and laid her on an improvised couch of soiled clothes.

In the bright lights of the laundry room, Kono realized that his imagination had played him tricks. There was no blood. The dark threads on the pavement were tar in the irregular cracks of the cement.

They attempted to revive Carlotta from her coma brought on by hysteria but were unsuccessful until the chauffeur, wiser in the ways of women than Kono, hit upon the thought of running his hand inside her dress. Carlotta, in a blaze of indignation and offended modesty, sat up! She was very much alive! But immediately she decided to faint again.

Kono summoned Charlie and Dr. Reynolds from the dinner table. The doctor would know what to do. But Kono had reckoned without his Pola. She, sensing the suppressed excitement in the air, gathered up Mrs. Reynolds and followed them to the laundry. Kono muttered curses. He had enough on his hands without the kind of scene at which

the highly temperamental Pola was adept. He tried to stop her. Pola pushed him aside.

Dr. Reynolds made a hasty survey of the prone Carlotta and prescribed a pail of cold water. This was duly sloshed over her, and she decided to come permanently out of her faint. Pola berated Kono for a brief moment, then turned her attention to Carlotta.

The battle was on! The Mexican tigress and the Polish lioness went at it tooth and nail. The advantage was Carlotta's at first as they were fighting in English and her English was better than Pola's. Pola made up for this discrepancy, however, in flashing eyes, wildly flailing arms, and Polish curses which sounded ominous, though none of the onlookers nor Carlotta understood a word.

The odds in verbal battle now seemed to be Pola's until Kono was inspired to throw a pail of water on *her*. Diverted by the cold shower, she turned her vituperations on him. Carlotta, taking advantage of this brief respite between the major combatants, grabbed an ice pick and, advancing upon Pola, announced loudly her intention of slaying her on the spot.

Dr. Reynolds, who had been enjoying the drama of the scene up to now, stepped in and disarmed Carlotta. He looked closely at her eyes while he held her, asked her what she had taken.

"I've taken poison," she declared as if suddenly remembering an unimportant incident. The doc-

tor suspected she was telling the truth but was not alarmed; he knew that whatever she had swallowed could not be deadly or it would have acted fatally before now. However, it was best to be on the safe side. He advised Kono to call an ambulance from the Receiving Hospital.

The laundry room was soon swarming with police as well as ambulance attendants, Kono's English on the telephone having been inadequate. Carlotta refused to go to the hospital. The police were obliged to carry her to the ambulance. Kono, at Charlie's instruction, "interviewed" the police to make reasonably sure of Charlie's name being kept out of the report which must be made of the incident.

The procession drove away, and Pola got down to the serious business of berating Kono for his stupidity. She accused him of every possible machination of a human devil. Charlie, who knew that Kono was slow of wit, knew also that in this instance he could have done no more. He defended Kono. Pola left the house in high dudgeon.

The quarrel that resulted was the prelude of the actual breakup of the engagement of Pola Negri and Charlie Chaplin. Charlie was beginning to tire of Pola's dramatics—and of Pola.

There was the inevitable coolness on his part; the violent though slightly muzzled recrimination on hers. They separated, each to go his own way. And Charlie kept the trees.

Second Marriage—*The Gold Rush*— First Child

IN 1923, the year of the success of *Woman of Paris*, Charlie began to "write" *The Gold Rush*, which was based on the epic theme of the mad dash of eager thousands to the icebound Klondike in the early nineties. On long walks alone, in days spent in fishing at Catalina Island off the shore of Wilmington, California, wrapped in contemplation of the idea and, as he realized, faced with almost insurmountable difficulties in actually filming such a story, he grew more enthusiastic as the tragic hardships endured by these early gold seekers seized upon his imagination.

He was, he knew, treading upon dangerous ground. Humor or satire directed at the locale of so much tragedy could act as a boomerang. Witness the success of *The Cruise of the Kawa*, that delightful travesty on the tropics written by George Chappell, Beaux Arts architect and humorist, under the pseudonym of "Walter Traprock, the Intrepid Explorer." And the failure of *My Northern Exposure*, from the same pen. Satiriz-

ing the grim tragedies of the Arctic, the latter book failed in its response from the reading public.

The physical difficulties of filming such a picture as *The Gold Rush* would have discouraged a less daring pioneer. For Charlie, Alaska was out of the question; the high Sierras would suffice. But the cost and the attendant risks to men and equipment must be considered.

With the idea for the picture still in nebulous form, he started crews of workmen on the preliminary task of cutting trails through the dense, snow-drifted forest of the selected location, to a height of nearly ten thousand feet. When this was completed, work was immediately begun on the pass which was to be similar to Chilkoot Pass of Klondike fame. This pass must run approximately twenty-four hundred feet in length and must rise to a further ascent of a thousand feet. The whole work, started nine miles from the railroad in the deepest snow of the winter, was a stupendous undertaking. The studio craftsmen literally hewed the mountains and valleys into a semblance of the Klondike region.

The breath-taking realism of the scenes in *The Gold Rush*, the climax of Charlie's portrayal of the futile, hapless character of the puny little fellow, a deadbeat trying to pit his fragile strength against the rugged realism of the greed for gold, justifies Charlie's comment upon this picture: "This is the picture I want to be remembered by,"

he told his friends and fellow workers, even before the critics had vociferously acclaimed his success.

The cost of *The Gold Rush*, he discovered, when all accounts were in, was scarcely more than that of *The Kid*. It was but little more costly to change the contours of mountains, Charlie decided, than to sit day after day using thousands of feet of negative to elicit one bit of histrionics from a youngster not overly burdened with the natural instinct of an actor and none too responsive to the creator's efforts.

A young part-Mexican girl had been brought to the studio by her mother for a test as leading lady in *The Gold Rush*. The girl was Lita Grey. The tests were satisfactory, and could Charlie have let it go at this, this portion of the story of his life would have been far different. But his inability to distinguish between his art and his quest for personal happiness clouding his judgment, the genius fell before the man, trapped by his emotions once more. He became engaged to Lita not long after she had signed her contract to play opposite him in *The Gold Rush*.

Before the sequences in which Lita was to appear before the camera could be filmed, she fell ill. The fanfare of press-agent publicity which had attended her selection for the part was hushed. Georgia Hale was quietly signed to take her place,

and Lita's sudden illness was given to the press as the reason for the substitution.

Behind the scenes of this seemingly innocent occurrence there was taking place a real-life drama of more portent than the romantic thread of *The Gold Rush*, with no comedy relief and with many tears. Lita was sixteen, and she was the leading lady, one might say, the star of the cast, and was supported by her mother, Mrs. Lillian Spicer, her grandparents, the Currys, as well as by an uncle, Edwin T. McMurry, who, moreover, was an attorney. Charlie was cast as the luckless villain of the piece. Definitely.

Lita's kin insisted that he marry her at once. Charlie came to the realization that he must again be enchained by the hateful ties of a marriage which, as in the case of his former one, was hopeless from the beginning. He and Lita had neither tastes nor mentalities in common, nor was there any real love upon which to build a mutual happiness or even content. His genius and the dark, troubled, complex nature of the man she would never fathom.

Charlie, dreading the Roman holiday the newspapers would make of their marriage, conceived the idea of going to Guaymas, Mexico, ostensibly to secure background pictures for a film. They got together cameramen and technicians, a full studio crew. Charlie, Chuck Reisner, his assistant director, Kono, Lita, and her mother slipped down



Lita Grey signing her contract to play opposite Charlie in *The Gold Rush*. Her mother, Mrs. Lillian Grey Spicer, looks on, Jim Tully, the writer, stands in center, next to him, Henry Bergeman, then Eddie Sutherland (since become an able director), and at extreme right, Alfred Reeves, studio manager.



Georgia Hale, who replaced Lita Grey in *The Gold Rush*.

to the station in Los Angeles to take the train for Lower California.

At the station they were met by Harrison Carroll, then a reporter on the Los Angeles *Times*, the large opposition paper to the Hearst-owned *Examiner*, and later a columnist on the *Herald-Express*. Also present was Jimmy Mitchell of the *Times*. These two announced their intention of accompanying the Chaplin party to Mexico, and no argument Charlie or Kono could make would dissuade them. Charlie assured them they were wasting their time trailing him on an uninteresting location trip. But his distraught manner only confirmed their suspicion that there was something more afoot. They knew he was making *The Gold Rush* and could not readily believe that another picture was to follow it so soon. And of course there was nothing in the barren wastes of Mexico near the California border that could have any bearing on a Klondike picture. They, with several other reporters who had joined them, decided to go along.

Installed in a hotel in Guaymas, the technicians obeyed an order from Charlie to take out, each morning, a small fishing craft and stay out all day, pretending to shoot scenes at sea. Kono was inducted as bodyguard to see that no newsmen got to Lita, or to her mother, or to Charlie, and also to report on the first auspicious moment at which they could give them all the slip.

All this went on in the highest good humor, and there was much chaffing between them. The reporters liked Charlie and regretted their obligation to their papers, for he seemed, really, to want to be let alone with his fiancée and her mother. As the days went by, they became bored with their fruitless watching and grew careless.

Charlie seized upon this opportunity, and he and Chuck Reisner, Mrs. Spicer, and Lita drove hurriedly to Empalme in the state of Sonora, and there on the twenty-fourth day of November, 1924, the unhappy event of the marriage of Lita Grey to Charlie Chaplin took place.

Kono had been left at Guaymas to assure the tardy reporters, when they finally tore themselves away from the various bars in the vicinity, that Charlie and the two women were out on the boat.

Coming home from Mexico, the wedding party took on, at Nogales, a comic-opera aspect. Every member had to submit to fumigation—to keep the United States free from hoof-and-mouth disease. The degerming was done outside, behind the immigration station in crude cabinets. There were only three cabinets; they were similar to those of the Turkish bath. Charlie, Chuck Reisner, and Kono were purified, three in a row, with only their heads in view, a guard on duty, and the assembled population of the border village a delighted audience. Truly this was Charlie's most remarkable "public appearance."

Once his wife and her mother were installed in his home in Beverly Hills, Charlie gave evidence of the distraught state of mind such an unhappy reality was bound to incur. His marriage to Lita Grey took on the semblance of his former one to Mildred Harris. The moody, self-absorbed genius was too submerged in the expression of himself to make a satisfactory husband to any young, pleasure-loving girl.

There is no reason to accuse Charlie Chaplin of deliberate lack of adherence to high principles. He simply did what hundreds of other men do in Hollywood; but unfortunately for him, through his fame, he was placed in a difficult position.

Concurrent with his engagement and marriage to Lita Grey runs an episode of Charlie's life which can be explained best as an antidote Charlie sought for his lost freedom.

It all began on an estate not far from Hollywood, one of those dream places beloved of the stars in the movie colony that suggest a perfect motion-picture set. In that lovely *milieu* Charlie met an actress from whom he received a sympathy and admiration that instantly acted as a soothing anodyne for his tortured state of mind and quickly developed into what appeared to be a deep and genuine love.

They met, Charlie and Maisie,* in moonlit gar-

* This is not her name, but because this star has retired into

dens which were unquestionably an incentive to romance, synthetic or real, to any two people not endowed with crossed eyes or harelips.

After his marriage Charlie became a regular guest at this home and the town home of the actress. He often flew to her for sympathy; there he could escape the carping recriminations of his wife and her family. The attachment grew in intensity.

That Lita Chaplin knew of his feeling for Maisie is evidenced by a clause in her divorce papers filed two years later, "a certain prominent motion picture actress" with whom Charlie told her he was in love. Apparently he was quite frank with his wife about his supposed feeling for Maisie. Partly from a satisfaction to be gained from his inherent love of drama, partly to goad his wife to divorce him, he urged Lita to meet his new interest. She refused. And she can hardly be blamed for this stand.

So, known only to his wife, the star's secretary, Kono, and two of Charlie's friends, a writer and critic, the incongruous romance progressed. Incongruous because Maisie's most outstanding talents consisted of wise-cracking, a hoydenish humor, and a careless generosity with expensive gifts.

Maisie left for New York in April of 1925. But by the time she had reached San Bernardino, a tele-

private life, she enjoys a legal "right to privacy" which it is not the writer's wish to invade.

gram had been dispatched to Charlie asking him to wire her at Needles where she would be at nine o'clock that evening, and saying that she was terribly lonesome.

Charlie replied that he talked about her all through lunch with a friend and assured her that "I am with you with all my love."

After Maisie's departure, Charlie was as one distraught. His home was an unhappy necessity where his young wife persisted in behaving as if she considered him a monster. Maisie had given him a sort of lighthearted companionship in direct contrast to the gloomy atmosphere and adverse vibrations of his home. He was worried over the impending birth of his baby, by this time, which would undoubtedly prove to be a tighter bond against his eventual escape. *The Gold Rush* demanded intense concentration of effort. Therefore Maisie's telegrams and, later, her letters, assumed an importance to him consistent with the circumstances of his depression.

From Albuquerque, New Mexico, came another telegram from Maisie. In this she gave Charlie a New York address to which to write. An answer duly sent by Charlie asked her to try to be happy and assured her he loved her.

Because she loved him for his real self, or as much of it as she was able to divine, and because Charlie, thrown off his guard by the fact that she was seeking no picture career through his stand-

ing, was wholehearted in his response to her seeking, one is likely to assume that this was the real love of his adult life up to this time.

It was not to be long, however, before Charlie would come to realize that in spite of the sympathetic companionship Maisie had given him, there were certain depths of his nature she seemed incapable of fathoming. And although her generosity and unfailing good humor had an irresistible appeal for Charlie, it saddened him to discover that Maisie was not able to give him that complete understanding of his complex and volatile temperament he so pathetically craved.

Her letters were written on personal monogrammed paper and unfailingly enclosed in envelopes addressed to Kono. They began, "Dearest," "My dear boy," "My dearest pal and severest critic," and "Precious." Their context ran: "Not having anything to do and having lost the inclination to do it, I am spending my time with a bottle of glue* thinking of you. Not that you remind me of glue but thinking it over I sort of like the idea, don't you?" And "I have tried hard to get away. I'm like a person in a cage. Tonight I leave for location to be gone three days then I will be back. I am going to keep on trying to telephone you but if I shouldn't be able to reach you, please think of me until I return. I will think of you always."

* Pasting her picture over that of Lita's in a snapshot of Charlie and Lita together.

An imprint of rouged lips at the top of the page bore the label, "My soul is in this kiss."

Enough!

One has only to examine the sheaf of Maisie's letters to know that here is no George Sand-De Musset grand passion; no Elizabeth Barrett-Robert Browning love of the spirit. There is nothing, in fact, in any of the letters which would betray any emotion deeper than the average housemaid's flurry of love for the "boy friend." No intellectuality, no mental need or craving; no crying out of a highly organized nature for the complete understanding of its beloved, is evinced in any of the letters sent during the six-year period. Rather is there disclosed a lamentable poverty of thought and feeling to offer to that mysterious, incalculable inhabitant of the starry world of creative genius, Charlie Chaplin.

That Maisie had the wealth and leisure to pursue the byways of self-development, of vehement aspiration to a larger life, places the burden of her guilt upon herself alone.

In vain one looks for some evidence of a rich and warm instinctive nature, independent of cultivation. One sees her face, round and pink and white, blank as a wild rose, opened. One sees her love, presumably the one love of *her* life, expressed in terms of lavish gifts. No big and contradictory rhythms of the heart; no exalted passion; no bittersweetness; no sense of the inescapable ruin, of

the destruction of their dissonant attachment, the irremediable.

Charlie possessed the awareness that Maisie lacked even though he was able to bury it temporarily and deceive himself that here were the attributes of escape, a sort of anodyne which dulled his senses rather than a full warm richness that filled the vacuity of his emotional life. He could talk of none of his tortuous thoughts to her. He was alone as ever in his prescience of tragedy in which his comedy is forever rooted.

On the evening of June 27, doctors and nurses bustled about the Chaplin home in Summit Drive, Beverly Hills. There was every indication of an important event about to occur.

Reporters and representatives of United and Associated Presses had been importuning Charlie for news of the heir. They were called in the next morning, and Charlie, trying hard to look as if he had just received exactly what he wanted from Santa Claus—in June—released the official date of the birth of his first son, Charles Spencer Chaplin, Jr.. The time and date were ten minutes past six o'clock in the morning of June 28, 1925.

It was soon after this that Charlie offered Lita \$250,000 to divorce him. He would, in addition, he assured her, provide liberally for the child. Lita indignantly refused this sum; in fact, she countered with a demand for three million dollars. Charlie considered this rather steep.

Charlie, who loves children in the abstract and has often manifested keen interest in an individual one, drew no joy from being father to his own son. He is apparently unable to experience the primitive satisfaction that the average man enjoys from mere continuity.

Lita became restless. Being young and inexperienced and not knowing just what she wanted from life, she decided to travel. She went to Catalina Island for a brief stay. Catalina is a simple resort which can be enjoyed inexpensively. Thousands of dollars were given her for this trip, a night's run on a boat from Wilmington near Los Angeles.

She returned and soon afterward went to Honolulu. More thousands of dollars were given her for this journey. Her credit at Los Angeles and Hollywood stores had been unlimited. A short time before the divorce papers were filed, she spent almost thirty thousand dollars on jewelry and clothes within a few days of careless shopping.

Charlie watched amazed at the pleasure anyone could derive from senseless extravagance, which is without the boundary of his comprehension. He put it down to the fact that she was a simple, untrained girl who had never had any appreciable sums of money at her command before and who lacked mental resources which would make such extravagance unsatisfying. She was enjoying it; he shrugged his shoulders and made no protest. Production of *The Gold Rush* took much of his energies and concentration.

For recreation he escorted Georgia Hale, who had replaced Lita in *The Gold Rush*, to night clubs and an occasional party. He enjoyed small *intime* dinners with Maisie at her home. He appeared in public with his wife often enough to put down news columnists' excessive speculation on their marital divergence.

There was one evening when he and Georgia Hale were dining at the Russian Eagle, the smart dining place of Hollywood at the time. They sat next the table at which a member of the French Foreign Office was host. At this table was a tall slender woman with exquisite bone structure, so beautiful that Sargent and many other artists had painted her again and again for their own delight in her "design." A natural blonde, proud and with an undeniable look of race, she was near Charlie's own age but pointed the truth that beauty often increases with age while mere prettiness may fade into something negligible.

Heedless of his companion's annoyance and of the angry glances sent his way by the European host, Charlie sat in gloomy absorption for the better part of an hour devouring with his eyes the Baronesse T——. He seemed to be reaching out to her as the symbol of all that he had missed, would always miss. It was not hard to read his somber thoughts: She is what I need, this woman with her Old World charm, her grace, her inner graciousness. A woman to whom beauty is not diamonds and fur coats but a woman to whom

great stirring music, a sunset, a single tree flung in silhouette against the sky, the poetry of life, would mean more than being Charlie Chaplin's wife.

His eyes, cloudy and dark blue, followed the figure to the door, his dinner lay untouched on his plate. There was hunger in his eyes, deep and primal, a pleading for life to give him something he had never had and which he could not quite define.

Charlie was inspired to repeat his detective work on Lita as he had attempted in the case of his former wife. He asked Kono to have a dictaphone installed in Lita's bedroom. Whether he hoped to catch the baritone of some hypothetical admirer, or only the conversation of Lita and her mother, was not clear to Kono. However, he obediently had some of the studio electricians place the transmitter of the instrument in the fireplace and run the wires ending in a receiver to the basement below.

Stealthily one night, Charlie, followed by Kono, went to the trunk room, picked up the earphones of the contraption, and listened. His chagrin was comical. He handed the instrument to Kono. Lita and her mother, it is true, were having an animated conversation, but all that came to the amateur detectives' ears was an excellent impersonation of two indignant cats on the back fence. The dictaphone, it seemed, was not a mechanical success.

Second Son—Broken Marriage—Escape

HOW THE BIRTH of the second child to this unhappy union of Lita and Charlie Chaplin came about will always be a matter of conjecture to those who took seriously the absurd accusations made by Lita in her divorce complaint, to say nothing of the few who were aware of the natural antagonism between the two. To these last, however, it was less mystery than tragedy as they watched the married life of the tragically mismated couple progress to an inevitable and disastrous finish. But nine months and two days after the registered date of Charles's birth, another boy was born to them and christened Sydney Earl Chaplin II.

When little Sydney was not quite ten months of age, in January of 1927, Lita sued Charlie for divorce and asked for an accounting of community property under the California law which grants to either party of the marriage contract a claim upon any property acquired while married. She demanded that a receiver be appointed for the Chaplin holdings and that an order *pendente lite* be granted restraining her husband from: first,

taking the children from her; second, assigning or transferring any property to others pending the outcome of the divorce.

This order included the picture, *The Circus*, upon which Charlie was working at the time, as producer, director, and star. Nine hundred thousand dollars had been expended upon the production, and although it was well on its way it was by no means completed.

Merna Kennedy played opposite Charlie in *The Circus* and was one of the few to withstand his charm. Merna was a friend of Lita's and showed a fine loyalty for Charlie's wife. Charlie was still engaged in sporadic efforts to endow Maisie with qualities of which she had never even heard.

Lita Chaplin's divorce complaint burst as a veritable bombshell upon the always more or less continuous marital skirmishes of the ladies and gentlemen of the screen. Not that anyone expected the marriage to last; but none, not even Charlie, was prepared for the lengths to which she would go in her accusations against the conduct and morals of the outstanding screen luminary of the day.

The complaint was filed against Charles Spencer Chaplin, Inc., a corporation; T. Kono; Alfred Reeves, studio manager; United Artists' Corporation, and various banks and John Does.

Soon the more sensational phases of the complaint were common gossip. "Have you heard what

Chaplin's wife accuses him of?" "He's a beast to treat that young girl so," and thus it went.

The milder accusations, such as paragraph (b) on page 3 of the lengthy vituperation, were to be expected. If Charlie Chaplin had not struck out at the fate which had once more entrapped him into a hateful marriage, he would have been more—or less—than human. This paragraph follows: "That on or about the 5th day of January, 1925, defendant [Charlie] came home about 1:30 o'clock A.M. and went into plaintiff's room while she was asleep, and wakened her and commenced to upbraid her, reproach her and condemn her on account of their said marriage; that at said time plaintiff was in a delicate condition, as aforesaid, and nervous from loss of sleep, and exhausted by excitement and turmoil, and commenced to cry. That she said to defendant: 'I am very sorry but it is not my fault, and I don't see how I can help it. Please let me rest and don't talk to me any more tonight about it, and I will talk to you in the morning.' That defendant replied in an angry and domineering voice, 'We'll talk about it right now.' That defendant thereupon remained in said room and continued to abuse and condemn plaintiff, as aforesaid, until five o'clock."

Divorce complaints in Hollywood have become milder and more civilized within the past fifteen years. It is accepted by each party to the action that neither is a beast or monster, nor is one party

as pure as a snowdrift and the other appended with tail and horns.

It cannot be denied that Charlie, often driven to frenzy by all the thousand and one restraints of an unhappy union, was at times unchivalrous; nor was he the angel of tolerance and unfailing courtesy which fits in with the accepted conception of a gentleman. Being, as he believed himself to be, in love with Maisie at the time did not increase his good nature and patience with his wife. And no man, far less an artist, can be expected to ignore his own conviction that he has been entrapped into a marriage hateful to his very soul.

Production on *The Circus* was stopped by Charlie upon receiving service of Lita's divorce complaint. He had taken the precaution of having his home and all studio property listed under corporation ownership save some large cash balances in various banks and Liberty bonds and Canadian War bonds to the amount of approximately three-quarters of a million dollars in value. These were secreted at the studio.

Sensing in the first gun fired, the newspaper furor, in an attack upon him, Charlie's impulse was to run, to escape. He was in a dreadful state of nerves and threatened to go to England to make pictures before he would agree to the settlement Lita had indicated she would demand.

While Lloyd Wright, who had succeeded Arthur

Wright, his late brother, as Charlie's attorney, prepared his line of defense and called in Gavin McNab, of San Francisco, as consulting attorney, Nathan Burkan, noted lawyer of New York, was engaged by Charlie as his personal attorney and adviser. Lita's battery of attorneys consisted of the firm of Young and Young, and L. R. Brigham, and was headed by her uncle, Edwin T. McMurry.

Charlie decided to leave secretly for New York, taking only Kono with him. A friend secured train tickets for them under his name. Avoiding the fast trains upon which motion-picture stars are accustomed to travel, the reservations were made on a "local" to Chicago.

Charlie and Kono boarded the train late at night. There was not a reporter in sight, for the utmost secrecy had attended their preparations for the journey. Charlie was quickly secluded in a drawing room, while Kono occupied a section in the same Pullman.

It was a four-day trip to Chicago on this train, which stopped at every small station, and at water tanks in between. There was no diner; at meal-times stops of twenty minutes were made at the Harvey houses along the route, and each time Kono jumped off, ate hurriedly, and brought a tray to Charlie, paying a deposit on the tray and silver and dishes, to be redeemed at the next stop. This enabled Charlie to eat leisurely as the train moved on.

After four days of dragging time, they reached Chicago, where a few straggling reporters meeting the train on the chance of a little story pounced upon them. Here was luck. Charlie, for all the press knew, was in seclusion in his home in Beverly Hills. Kono, seeing Charlie's lowering look, put them off. Mr. Chaplin was very tired. He was making a hurried trip on business. Loud guffaws met this information. A hurried trip on this turtle! Well, anyway, Mr. Chaplin was very tired. He would meet them at the Blackstone Hotel an hour later.

It is to be hoped that those reporters are not waiting yet at the Blackstone, for Charlie and Kono hopped into a taxi and rode to the extreme north side of Chicago, to the Hotel Belmont, where there were no reporters and where the blasé manager would not have flicked an eyelash if Her Majesty, Dowager Queen Mary herself had registered at his inn.

Kono went into town to reserve accommodations for the Twentieth Century Limited leaving for New York that night, but there were no berths available. Leaving his telephone number, he returned to the Belmont to find Charlie possessed of a sudden appetite for Chinese food. They dined at the noted New China Chop Suey House at the corner of Van Buren and Clark Streets. No one recognized Charlie sitting back in a dim corner of the cafe. It was pleasant to be in a strange city

eating an excellent dinner in obscurity. As they drove through the snowy night back to the hotel Charlie was jubilant at the success of their ruse. His joy was not long-lived.

Kono received a call from the ticket agent next morning. A special Pullman was to be attached to the Twentieth Century for Mr. Chaplin and his secretary.

"I hate to doubt their pure motives, but it sounds fishy to me," Kono told Charlie as they breakfasted in their rooms.

Charlie upbraided him for a cynic. "Why shouldn't they put on an extra car for me?" he asked truculently. "They didn't say we had to pay for the whole car, did they?" he added.

"No, and that's just where the catch comes. I don't like it." Kono was dubious. Charlie laughed at his fears.

When they opened their door to go to the station they were greeted by no less than thirty reporters crowding the hall. Loud clamors for interviews rent the air, but Charlie smiled and went deaf and dumb, and Kono "no spik Englis"—which was not too gross an exaggeration. Finally goaded to recklessness by their inability to get a word out of either, one of the reporters boasted that the whole lot of them were accompanying the pair to New York. A light dawned on Kono. So this was the reason for the extreme thoughtfulness of the railroad. The press had bought out the car! With

resignation he accepted the inevitable and prepared for the siege.

With Charlie securely locked in his drawing room, it was a baffled group of newsmen until one veteran reporter from the New York *American*, seizing a chance when Kono came out of the state-room and left it unlocked, slipped in and overcame Charlie's scowling displeasure by talking fast. He only wanted to relieve Mr. Chaplin's boredom and his own, he assured him. He suggested a game of poker.

Kono was disturbed to find them absorbed in the game when he returned. He cursed himself for having left the door unlocked and sat down in a corner apparently immersed in a magazine, and listened. It all seemed harmless enough; there was no talk of personalities, no attempt on the part of the newsman to draw Charlie into a discussion of his private affairs. And Charlie was intent upon his cards, trying as hard to win from his opponent as if it were a matter of his next meal.

A little after midnight Kono got up and announced flatly that it was time to go to bed. The reporter assumed a downcast expression. He couldn't, he confided, sleep at all on a train. Charlie chimed in that neither could he. He would rather go on playing than toss about in his berth. It slowly penetrated Kono's mind that he was no match for a keen-witted reporter. He left for his own bed, after a warning look thrown at Charlie.

The next morning Charlie appeared distraught and anxious. He confessed to Kono that he had talked too much. It seemed that immediately after Kono retired, the reporter had begun talking of the trouble, all of it mythical, no doubt, that *he* had had with women. Charlie had sympathized with him and had responded with his views on women in general and his current wife in particular. The game had continued until daylight, Charlie by that time having told all of his plans, his marriage experience, and so on, ad infinitum. He had extracted a promise, however, that he would not be quoted.

Kono sought out the reporter and asked that the whole confidence be kept off the record. The reporter laughed at him, insinuated that *he* was none too bright. Kono offered *him* money; the reporter waved this aside. There was nothing to worry about, *he* assured *him*. So convincing was he in his protestations that Kono, never quick-witted, was inclined to believe it had all been a pother about nothing.

New York—Attack—Defense

IN NEW YORK Charlie and Kono went to the bachelor apartment of Nathan Burkan to stay. Burkan, a genial and hospitable man, put himself out to soothe Charlie's nervous apprehension about the outcome of the divorce. The main point, he assured him, was that his side must maintain a dignified silence through the press. This would do much to swing public sentiment and sympathy over to Charlie. Lita was not using such discretion.

Mr. Burkan suggested the theater that evening. There was a good play, an amusing one, at the Times Square, Anita Loos's *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. Charlie agreed to go; he wanted to put the whole matter out of his mind, and Mr. Burkan's attitude was comfortably reassuring.

It was a cold night in January. Gusts of snow greeted them as they reached the theater. As Mr. Burkan stepped up to the box office, Charlie shivered with more than the cold. The newsboys were crying his name. His heart sank, his stomach turned over.

Snatching a paper, he read just enough to see

his secrets confided the night before to the "sympathetic" reporter for the New York *American* spread with embellishment for the delectation of its readers always avid for "crime and underwear." Charlie was stripped in this story to a mere shred of undergarment. *Dementia Americana* was well launched.

It is hard for the average citizen to comprehend the total absence of ethics and decency in some of the gentlemen of the press in America. But in fairness to the reporters must it be said that it is the established policy of the papers which must shoulder the blame. The writer was told by a reporter that if it so happened that he was sent to get a sensational story on his own sister or mother and stopped at the border line of news, failed to color the facts into a jumble of lying melodrama, refused to betray confidences or steal pictures, it would mean instant dismissal and probably boycott.

Charlie became violently ill. Mr. Burkan, distressed over his indiscretion as much as over his present reactions, hurried him to the gentlemen's lounge in the theater where he vomited and had to lie down for some time on a couch before he could be taken home. Mr. Burkan was able to keep the curious away from the violently nauseated figure on the couch. The passers-by were men, and fortunately there was a majority well-bred enough to leave him quite alone. So continued was

Charlie's agitation and nausea that all thought of seeing the play was relinquished. He was rushed home and put to bed.

All through the night Charlie kept Kono by his bedside. He had to have someone to whom he could pour out his despair. He was through. He was finished. He could never face the world again, never make another picture, never hold up his head after this. As the night wore on, his condition became more serious, his temperature rose alarmingly, and Mr. Burkan suggested calling in a doctor, Gustav Tiek. Dr. Tiek pronounced his condition a nervous breakdown and prescribed complete rest in bed. He strongly recommended that all newspapers be kept from his room.

Of this last Charlie would not hear. He insisted upon having all of the New York papers brought to him, seemed to derive a melancholy pleasure from the mental lacerations the newspapers, almost without exception, were giving him. He learned from them that private detectives armed with court orders had visited the studio, the manager, Al Reeves, and the banks where he had safety deposit boxes, and had clamped attachments on everything he owned except the War bonds, Canadian and American, which were safely secreted at the studio. He also had a bank account of some twenty thousand dollars on deposit in New York. Payrolls at the studio were held up, pictures under production stopped; even the hat and shoes and

stick, the trademarks of his comedies, were under attachment.

The *Graphic*, New York scandal sheet, owned by Bernarr MacFadden of *True Story* cult, came out next day with the divorce complaint in full, whereas even the most yellow of the other journals had slipped in only an occasional paragraph and hinted at the others. Copies of the notorious document were struck off on printing presses, it was learned, and were selling in the larger cities for sums ranging from twenty-five cents to ten dollars.

Charlie was too intelligent not to realize the disaster of this hue and cry to his popularity in the Middle West, the South, and in the smaller towns in every section of the country. Hollywood would discount the charges; New York would shrug its shoulders and laugh it off; Boston would ask, "Who is Charlie Chaplin?" and Chicago would probably announce that it didn't give a damn. But the hinterland! Women's clubs and church organizations there would demand that a stop be put to the showing of his pictures.

Motion pictures do not depend upon a few cities for the enormous profit which makes possible the spending of millions in production. America had demonstrated during the War that she made little distinction between an artist's private life or convictions and his art. Witness the treatment accorded the altruistic Fritz Kreisler when he was overtaxing his strength to the danger point to play

a crowded schedule of benefit concerts for the families of destitute Belgian, German, and Allied artists. In many towns he was booed and hissed. He was a German. England played Wagner, all the German masters, for the duration of the war. We were pleased to ban them for accident of birth.

Art should know no time nor place nor nationality. And who, possessing no standard by which an artist can be measured, is competent to set himself up as judge? Certainly not the hypocritical, self-righteous "respectable citizen"; his bourgeois narrow gauge rule is inadequate for measure of art or the artist.

Ambrose Bierce has said, "It is the lot of all men of genius to suffer at the hands of mediocrity. . . . Let a man have a thought that transcends the commonplace and he is denounced as a neurotic or a drunkard. . . . The expression of the thought can be explained in no other way by the aspiring peasantry."

In the hysteria of the moment, Charlie's supposed transgressions were counted more than mere drunkenness or neuroticism. And communities in Canada and in the United States were guilty of turning thumbs down on all Chaplin pictures.

Meanwhile, for four days and nights, it was necessary to keep a close watch upon Charlie's every action. His despair was so great at the readiness of the public to accept accusations that were despicable lies that Kono, by Mr. Burkan's instruc-

tions, stayed at his bedside, did not leave the confines of the suite occupied by the crushed actor. And while he prevented any attempts at desperate action he infuriated Charlie with his attempts at comforting him.

"What do you care?" Kono asked him. "You can retire tomorrow and enjoy everything money can buy. You can go to England and live."

"That's all you know of what work means to me," Charlie shouted. "What do I care? Oh, what's the use! You wouldn't know what I was talking about."

Lonely and confused, Charlie meditated upon the contrast of justice as applied to business affairs and to an artist's most valuable commodity, admiration by the public. A businessman, he reflected, whose affairs have become involved, is protected from the animus of creditors who wish to ruin him outright. Even more important, he is protected from the public, the receiver's books closed to indiscriminate prying. Not so the hapless defendant in a divorce suit. Instead, every detail of his wife's charges is made public before he has an opportunity to defend himself legally. He is pronounced guilty before he is tried, is placed in the public stocks to be hooted at, jeered, and stoned before he has a chance for defense and until the populace tires of its sensation and veers off to another victim.

An artist whose existence depends upon the

personal regard of his audiences is doubly vulnerable in such a matter.

Wheeler Dryden, half-brother to both Charlie and Syd, was in New York at this time. Dreamy, somewhat ineffectual if weighed by financial success of both his brothers,* Wheeler had entered into Charlie's life only sketchily. He is known to have been on the Chaplin payroll, content with twenty-five dollars a week. Dryden has dabbled in serious legitimate drama in New York and in England.

Maintaining the serio-comic discretion of a bar sinister relative of a royal house, yet evincing a brotherly loyalty withal, he sent the following letter to Kono:

1730 Broadway
New York City, N. Y.
(Tel. Circle 2131)
Jan. 23rd, 1927.

Dear Kono:

You will remember me as a very close relative of Mr. Chaplin's. The last time I saw you was in August 1925 at the Ritz-Carlton when I called on Mr. Chaplin to keep a luncheon engagement with him.

Kono, please hand the enclosed note to Mr. Chaplin personally. It is just a short note to tell him that I am prepared to do anything in my power to do, to help him in his present trouble. He may want to get in touch with me at short notice so kindly make a note of my address and telephone number in your address book.... In any case I shall call upon Mr. Chaplin personally within a day or two. I am giving him time to recuperate completely from his illness.

With best wishes
WHEELER DRYDEN

* Syd Chaplin had entered the Chaplin studio and was producing moderately successful comedies in which he himself starred.

Reason gradually asserted itself with Charlie. Slowly courage had filtered through where there had been only despair. He told himself that this was only a phase of his life, not the whole; that it would recede before the next wave of sensation into a vague remembrance. Eventually his people would not condemn him. They would know that his characterization on the screen was a truer picture of him than that stirred by scandalmongers, a very human fellow who made mistakes but who gave them his best and who strove always to make that best, perfection.

Editorial writers, some of the better ones, began to take up the cudgels in Charlie's behalf. Their inky ammunition was aimed less at Lita than against the sheeplike condemnation of him for his private life by people whose own houses were somewhat transparent and who had nonetheless laid in a goodly supply of stones.

Livingston Larned on the editorial pages of the White Plains, (N. Y.) *Daily Reporter* was one of the first to lash out at Charlie's self-righteous critics. He wrote in part: "At the very first intimation of gossip, we zestfully rip reputations apart and set ourselves up as moral censors of the universe. . . . As far as the public is concerned a vast number of stones are being thrown by people who live in glass houses. If the other person does something, it's a crime against common decency and civilization; if *they* are caught with the goods, it's

quite another matter. If they are not caught, their moral pose is simply gorgeous. We would be immensely interested in a cross section of the personal and private lives of any one hundred people who are raising such a hullabaloo over Charlie Chaplin. There would be enough slime to keep the pink-petticoated tabloids in scandal broth for years to come.

"Charlie Chaplin has manufactured happiness, entertainment, release from boredom. . . . It is a vast and immeasurable record of high achievement. The echoes of laughter and light-hearted gaiety he has inspired can be heard around the world."

Other editors followed suit. H. L. Mencken, who was no admirer of Charlie's "innocuous film buffooneries," took out his flail and lashed the newspapers for pandering to the public's avid interest in scandal. He wrote in the Baltimore *Evening Sun*: "The very morons who worshipped Charlie Chaplin six weeks ago now prepare to dance around the stake while he is burned; he is learning something of the psychology of the mob. . . . A public trial involving sexual accusations is made a carnival everywhere in the United States save perhaps in a few states *that are not quite one hundred per cent American*, but nowhere is there more shameless a delight in obscenity than in California. The retired Iowa cow valets who swarm the state, especially in the southern section thereof, are hot for

bawdy shows, and like them best when they are free."

The divorce battle proceeded. On February 11, four months before the tax trouble was known to have been settled, the New York *Sun* had come out with a story by special dispatch from Hollywood that the prominent clubwomen of the film capital and adjacent Los Angeles had started a fund for "the penniless wife and children" of Charlie Chaplin. It was, purportedly, to pay the rent on their house and provide money for their actual necessities. Lita Chaplin, it stated, had been awarded four thousand dollars a month temporary alimony pending the outcome of her divorce suit but had been unable to collect a penny of it, owing to legal technicalities at which Charlie's attorneys were adept, and also because of claims on the Chaplin property filed by Federal Income Tax authorities. Charlie's formal announcement that he would not be responsible for his wife's debts had shut off all avenues of credit.

Charlie's lawyers had offered Lita twenty-five dollars a week, which she had refused as inadequate and in direct contravention of the court order issued by Judge Guerin.

"If Chaplin thinks he can starve his child-wife into submission he is reckoning without the women of Hollywood," said Mrs. M. R. Browningfield of the Ebell Club, in a statement to a representative of the New York *Sun* on that date. "Thirty women

representing twenty clubs met Thursday night last, and we have already begun to raise the money to pay Mrs. Chaplin's rent and to properly feed and care for her little boys. We are not taking sides in the divorce case but we are not willing that this eighteen-year-old wife and mother shall suffer from want while her husband whose superior age and experience should have made him more tolerant, is employing his expensive lawyers to deprive her of use of the money the judge says she should have and which Chaplin can well afford."

Each of the women pledged to contribute one hundred dollars by the end of the week, which would give Lita three thousand dollars to meet immediate demands.

It was not the direct fault of Charlie, of course, that the Federal Government had tied up this temporary alimony, but it was with his full knowledge and consent that his own attorneys had so clouded the proceedings with petty technicalities, and it was with his approval that his own personal purse strings were tightened and that his attorneys offered Lita the meager sum of twenty-five dollars a week, purported to come from Lloyd Wright's own pocket. It was admirable of neither Charlie nor Mr. Wright that they employed such weapons against a very young woman and two small children, Charlie's own children. Follows an excerpt from a letter written by Mr. Wright to Mr. Nathan Burkan under date of February 7, 1927:

We know that the other side is getting very tired. They have accomplished nothing and they realize that sentiment is turning against them. *They have tried to approach us with a compromise offer but we have, thus far, refused to entertain it. . . .*

Their going to the District Attorney has cost them a host of friends. For instance the last time they went to him, they informed him that I was voluntarily making these contributions to the children, and not as Chaplin's agent. It is true that I have given them the impression, and necessarily so, that the money was coming out of my own funds and I will continue to do so. Otherwise if any accumulation of moneys were permitted here, they would try to get it under the Receiver's order or under the order of the Federal Government or under anyone's control that might try to embarrass us.

The interference of the clubwomen of Hollywood and Los Angeles in the Chaplin affairs was from a cursory glance put down to the age-old village persecution. Tar and feather the malefactor who dares to step aside from the narrow paths of rectitude cut through the dense forest of human behavior!

Charlie's attitude toward this gesture was a mixture of worry over antagonizing organized opinion, and lofty contempt that they could not grasp the truth that he was beyond the cruelty of which they accused him.

Charlie's statement in answer to the clubwomen's activities follows:

I find that I am accused of letting my children go hungry for lack of milk. I had heard a rumor of it before but now I learn the charge has actually been made and is being repeated. It seems silly to deny it but I have had

to deny so many other silly charges that I must now give my word that this charge is not only untrue but was manufactured for the sole purpose of injuring me and holding me up.

I don't believe a man has ever lived who would refuse milk to hungry children. And when you realize that I have no other interest in the present controversy than to regain my children and look after them, you will also realize the absurdity of the charge that I am letting them go hungry. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Chaplin's lawyers have checks of mine in their possession which could buy milk. The reason they have not cashed them is that they want bigger checks. [Considerably larger checks were ordered by the court and ignored by Charlie and his attorneys.] They do not want milk for the children. They want to milk me. . . . I will make a fight for the sake of my children. They will never want for anything that I can give them. But it will be a tedious fight and you will hear many rumors and charges. You can trust a group of lawyers who are out to hold me up for money and publicity to do everything they can to intimidate the defendant so that he will settle with them for cash.

All I ask is that the public suspend judgment until the case is decided. I can fight an unjust charge even though all the lawyers of California are behind it. But I do not think it fair to ask me to fight all gossip and all charges and all rumors that are spread against me by people whose only interest is to make money out of me.

"Settle for cash" is exactly what Charlie did in the long run. Without inconvenience to himself he could have given one million out of a probable ten million he had and saved himself these accusations from many sources. After a long siege, he paid Lita six hundred thousand dollars, and large fees to his attorneys.

Charlie made no outstanding effort to get sole possession of his boys. They were not the issue

uppermost in his mind, for he apparently lacked the so-called normal instincts of the usual father. He understands the heart of a child as perhaps no other dramatist except the late Sir James Barrie, but it is an abstract understanding, impersonalized, inclusive of the whole of childhood. And his attitude, consistent with his views formerly expressed to Clare Sheridan, was that the boys would care for him because he was their father.

In a letter to Nathan Burkan from Lloyd Wright, dated February 10, there is enlightenment on the methods of his defense against what Charlie sincerely believed to be a holdup. Wright wrote, "We know from confidential sources that our continued hammering at them is breaking their morale. . . . They are ready to talk settlement but it is our opinion that we should not yet see them until we have continued our process of breaking them down a little longer.

"We have wonderful contacts with what is going on. We have every possible influence at work for us, and frankly, we cannot see anything but final and complete success. . . . The strongest influences in the state [California] are helping us in every particular we request."

"Final and complete" success Charlie felt was necessary. He was sure that if his attorneys slackened their efforts one whit, it might cost him his right of expression on the screen. And deprived of this outlet, he would no doubt have sickened and died.

He dreaded a court trial of the divorce, hoped for a settlement.

On July 20, 1927, Kono received the following telegram from Lloyd Wright:

AFTER WE ACCEPTED THEIR PROPOSITION AND UPON ABSOLUTE ASSURANCE THAT SHE WISHED IT AND APPROVED IT WE SUBMITTED AGREEMENT AS WAS SENT YOU SUNDAY STOP SHE NOW RAISING CERTAIN QUESTIONS AND HAS EXPRESSED DESIRE TO DELAY FINAL APPROVAL AND SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENT STOP WE ARE SURE THEY ARE PLAYING POKER STOP WE ARE PROCEEDING WITH PREPARATIONS FOR TRIAL AND HAVE NOTIFIED THEM STOP MCNAB AND I FEEL THAT AGREEMENT WILL BE REACHED AND EXECUTED WITHIN SHORT TIME NEVERTHELESS WE MUST MAKE BOLD FRONT AND CARRY ON PREPARATIONS BECAUSE OF HER TREACHERY STOP NOTHING TO BECOME ALARMED ABOUT AND WE HAVE INFORMED NATE OUR COURSE AND HE APPROVES STOP ONE OF THE POINTS ABOUT WHICH THE PLAINTIFF AND HER UNCLE ARE FIGHTING IS THE STRONG PROVISIONS WE HAVE MADE THAT IF SHE MAKES FURTHER ATTACK ON DEFENDANT AFTER SETTLEMENT SHE WILL LOSE THE POSTPONED PAYMENT STOP THIS IS THE MOST VITAL PART OF CONTRACT STOP. . . . ALL SEND REGARDS

Charlie was weary of hearing about the settlement that constantly approached the verge of completion and then retreated. A recent invitation appealed to him. It was from the Atwater-Kents in Philadelphia, for luncheon, the horse show, and an overnight stay.

Interlude—Divorce Settlement—
The Circus

THE INVITATION from Mrs. Atwater-Kent gave explicit directions as to the train Charlie and Kono were to take to Philadelphia and at which station they would be met, the East-side Station.

The short trip was uneventful until just before the train reached the outskirts of Philadelphia and slowed down for the city traffic. Kono was a bit apprehensive as Charlie got up with a newspaper in his hand and disappeared into the gentlemen's lavatory. But when some fifteen minutes passed and they approached the East-side Station and no sign of Charlie, he was positively anxious. He got up, walked the length of the car, and knocked on the door.

"Go away!" yelled Charlie. "Don't bother me!"

"But, Charlie, we're getting into the station," he remonstrated.

"Can't help it. Not interested," was Charlie's reply, with the indifference of a king on his throne.

Kono's heart dropped down somewhere in the region of his boots. So Charlie was going to be

temperamental. So *he* was going to have trouble.

The train ground to a stop. Peeking through a window, Kono saw the crowd surrounding the couple who were undoubtedly the host and hostess of the occasion; saw the cameramen with their cameras set up on tripods; saw the dozens of reporters sniffing the air like hounds on the scent.

He dashed back and rapped firmly on the door of "Men." He called, "Charlie, we're in Philadelphia, the East-side Station. We've got to get off. The Atwater-Kents are here to meet you. Does that mean anything to you?"

There was a silence of a brief moment, then: "I can't help it," came the emphatic reply through the door, "if the whole damned world is here. I've been trying to get this newspaper read all morning, and I'm going to stay here if it takes all day!"

Kono with mayhem in his heart looked around to see the porter disappearing off the car with a small bag of his containing valuable papers. He jumped from the train and pushed through the crowd, hurried after him. The reception crowd took no notice of him; their gaping expectant faces were turned toward the platform of the car from which Charlie Chaplin should descend.

Finally when he had retrieved the bag, Kono dashed back to re-enter the car and renew his pleas to Charlie, only to find the steps up, the door closed, and the train getting under way.

The Atwater-Kents hardly noticed the little

Japanese who was running along beside the train pounding vigorously on the car door. Charlie Chaplin, claiming the privileges of a genius, had disappointed them. *They* had been disappointed by stars of grand opera.

Kono gave up the futile chase and returned to the waiting group. With the type of humor tinged with cruelty of the average Japanese he was highly amused at their disappointment, at the leftover expressions on their faces. His amusement was short-lived, however; he realized he had a bit of explaining to do. He was racking his mind for something more plausible—and a trifle more elegant—than the bare facts, when there was a shout from the crowd, "Kono! Where's Chaplin?" And a New York reporter who recognized him bore down upon him. Everyone gathered round. Of course this was Kono, Charlie's personal secretary! They inundated him with questions until he grew dizzy trying to evolve some modest explanation of Charlie's absence.

At last he took refuge in assuring them that he would catch the elusive guest after a reporter had told him the train made two more stops in Philadelphia. He broke away for the nearest telephone. He called the Dearborn Station, in the middle of the city. No, the stationmaster had not seen Charlie, was sure he had not got off the train. He then called the West-side Station, the last stop in Philadelphia. The train had not yet arrived there,

but the stationmaster assured him he would set a good lookout for Charlie Chaplin and see that he got the telephone number Kono left. Kono then returned to the deluge of excited chatter outside.

After forty minutes of cooling their heels, a loudspeaker blared out the information that Mr. Kono was wanted on the telephone. Dashing in and grabbing the receiver, Kono heard a plaintive, faintly accusative voice at the other end.

"Why did you leave me? You're a hell of a secretary."

"Never mind the bawling out!" Kono shot the words into the transmitter. "Where are you?"

"How should I know? I haven't the foggiest."

"Well, put somebody on the phone who *has* got some sense," the exasperated Kono directed. There was a brief pause, and someone who said he was a waiter explained that Charlie was in a restaurant a few blocks from the West-side Station. Would Mr. Kono come and get him?

Mr. Kono would, and so would about fifty other people, gladly.

Charlie, unconcerned, met them all in front of the restaurant. He had lunched, he informed them comfortingly.

Tightening their belts and mustering their manners for the honor of dear old Philadelphia, the Atwater-Kents and their guests led the way, lunchless, to the horse show.

The reporters found themselves in a rare spot.

They had a story but how to write it? They relieved their feelings somewhat by mildly lambasting Charlie for his lack of social grace, but even this thrust was half-hearted.

The overnight visit, with a large dinner party, was voted a success by all who came. The Joseph Wideners bore Charlie off as their prize for another twenty-four-hour visit. And it is recorded that once he was captured, his newspaper reading quite completed, he was a guest who was charming and witty and gay.

After a brief trip to Atlantic City, Charlie, with Kono, returned to New York. He was beginning to chafe again at his attorneys' delay in arriving at definite settlement with Lita. But he decided that they should stay in Manhattan or its environs until they had some final word.

An invitation came from Madame Frances Alda, red-haired member of the Metropolitan Opera, from her estate, Casa Mia, on Long Island. Alda had been married to Gatti-Casazza, impresario of the Opera for about four years at this time. He was in Europe for the summer recruiting new singers.

Charlie and Alda got on famously. They boated and fished and lolled under the great trees of her private beach and talked. In the evenings she gave dinners at which Charlie met as many of the great names of opera as were available, or who were

speaking to Alda. She had incurred a great deal of jealousy by marrying the director.

Madame Alda tells a little story of Charlie in her abruptly ending memoirs that ran for two issues in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. The fact that she knew Charlie so casually makes her story quite innocent of *double entendre*. It seems they were fishing from the end of the pier of Casa Mia. Charlie accorded her magnetism on the opera stage and off, but he was, he said, skeptical about the susceptibility of the fish. After much good-natured chaffing, Alda challenged him to a bet to prove her prowess as a fisherman. Charlie was to pay her one dollar for every fish lured from the bay. When she had hauled in her eighty-third reproachful-looking fish, Charlie, who had been growing more and more worried, cried out, "Enough, the bets are off!"

From Casa Mia, he was carried off by William B. Leeds, Jr., the tin-plate heir, whose wife, Princess Xenia of Russia, wished to meet him. Here there were more parties, and Charlie was exhibited to more socialites of Long Island.

Kono, who had stayed in town to keep in touch with Nathan Burkan and the attorneys on the West Coast, felt that their welcome was wearing thin at Mr. Burkan's and moved their belongings to the Ritz. He was staying pretty constantly in their rooms hoping for the call from California that would enable them to start for home.

One afternoon about five o'clock, the telephone rang. It was Mr. Leeds. He had, he told Kono, heard so much about him, he wanted to have a look at him. Kono, suspecting that Charlie had been spurred by a bit of drinking into extolling his virtues to Leeds, was reluctant to go to Long Island as Leeds urged. Leeds became more insistent, so Kono agreed to come down in the speedboat which was being sent in to the Fourteenth Street pier.

The boat arrived, and Kono got aboard. He accepted this mode of travel with serenity until the chap who was running the boat confided in him that he was a chauffeur, not a seaman. He had never made the trip from New York to Long Island before, he added, in *any* boat. He sped the boat through the water at an alarming rate and headed, as he hoped, for the north shore of the Island.

For two hours they cut through the water in the growing darkness but did not seem to get anywhere, and finally the chauffeur acknowledged that he could make out no land. It was obvious that they were well out to sea. The boat, he replied to Kono's inquiries, had no compass, and the headlights were small and dim.

On they sped until a warning sputter from the motor told them the gasoline was getting low. A hasty examination of the tank proved it nearly empty. Not too far away they saw the lights of

a ship and headed for it. Hailing the large boat, they enquired their position. "You're in Connecticut," was the answering yell from one of the crew, "heading toward Massachusetts!"

"Can you give a guy some gasoline?" the chauffeur called.

"Yeah, come up alongside, we'll swing it down."

The tank partially filled by the generous sailors, the speedboat was turned and headed back toward what both of them hoped was the Long Island shore. It was quite dark now, and Kono weakly suggested that they not be too fussy about what pier they took. Just any that came along.

Meanwhile, the Leedses and Charlie, waking up to what, in their exuberance, they had done, had grown anxious. They built a huge bonfire on the beach near their pier. But without the aid of glasses it appeared as a small, flickering light to the two men in the boat. Finally they decided that the light had some significance for them, was a beacon light to guide them in. The speedboat was headed carefully in, and sure enough they found the Leedses' pier and tied up.

Kono was grateful that his seafaring experience with a chauffeur as skipper and crew was over. He was received with enthusiasm by Charlie and Mr. Leeds, who had fortified themselves with additional drinks to bear up under the imagined fate of the two Magellans.

The dinner awaiting him was excellent, and

never had Kono so appreciated hospitality. He had pictured himself adrift with a sea biscuit and a chauffeur-captain who, he now suspected, had found the New York pier quite by accident.

Back in New York, Charlie's restlessness grew. He wanted to get back to Hollywood and complete *The Circus*, held up so long by his marital tangle. He took long walks as an outlet for repressed energy. As he wandered about New York at this time, the central idea for his next picture, *City Lights*, began taking nebulous shape in his mind.

Irrelevant to pictures, however, there was occasional amusement to be found on these walks. He came back to the hotel one day after a four hours' stroll, excited over a find in an optical shop. "It's marvelous! Marvelous! I told the man you'd be down to get it," he exclaimed to Kono.

"Get what?" Kono inquired irritably.

"Why, the telescope, of course. It's marvelous, I tell you. A German lens, I think. I've never seen anything like it."

"If you could just give me some idea where," Kono suggested. "Did you get a card?" Perhaps the proprietor had thrust one on him and he had pocketed it without thinking.

"I haven't the foggiest idea, except—" he brightened, "—except that it's *down town*."

"That's a big help. On the Avenue? On a side street?"

"*Not* on a side street," Charlie announced triumphantly. He *was* a help after all. "I must have that telescope," he added. "It's marvelous, marvelous!"

"How much is it?" Kono asked.

"About \$780. It's second hand."

Kono, realizing he had elicited as specific directions as were to be had, put on his hat and took a last look around the apartment; it might be a long, long time before he saw it again. Oh, well, it was just after noon.

Down Broadway, up Madison Avenue, down Fifth, up Lexington, Kono trudged, visiting twenty-five or thirty optical stores on his itinerary. "Did Mr. Chaplin come in here today? And see a telescope?" It began to sound like a refrain. He was hard put to it toward the last to keep from hysterical giggles.

Some of the salesmen were skeptical, thinking it was a gag; others looked as if they wished it were true; one was doubtful, drew Kono out further, and then put forward a telescope, new and not of German make. Kono departed angrily from the shop. He went back to Fifth Avenue, entered a small shop opposite the Library. "Did Mr. Chaplin——" He got no further. The proprietor, Mr. Atkinson, beamed.

"It's all ready to go," he told Kono, who took one look at the enormous, bulky parcel and tried to lift it. Visions of adding this to their voluminous

luggage prompted him to ask, "Will you crate it and ship it to us at Los Angeles?" Of course. Kono wrote him a check for it. The freight would be collected on delivery.

Hailing a taxi, Kono sank back and rested his tired legs; he was no athlete. When he got back to the hotel Charlie was disappointed at not having his toy in New York, but when Kono explained that unless they installed it on the roof of the hotel, there would be little perspective, he gave in.

Months later when Charlie had got home, the telescope was set up in his bedroom, at the window overlooking John Barrymore's home about a mile opposite, and adjustable to the hills beyond. The powerful telescope was a revelation to the few friends admitted to his room. And Barrymore will no doubt be surprised to learn that he enjoyed the relative privacy of a goldfish until the trees (Pola's trees) about Charlie's house grew to a height shutting off John's house, Charlie's favorite theater. There should be a law or something. . . .

There remained the hills. A picnic couple driving up the winding road to a spot overlooking San Fernando Valley beyond could be watched taking their blankets, car seat, and lunch baskets from the car. The remarkable lens enabled the watchers from Charlie's window to distinguish the comic section of the Sunday newspaper from the news section.

When the Graf Zeppelin was moored in Ingle-

wood, at least fourteen miles from the house, squinting into the telescope revealed details of dress, the actions of the people milling about the dirigible outside the limit rope, and the dirigible itself, with more clarity than a view from the landing field.

In August word came from Lloyd Wright that Charlie was to meet him and Gavin McNab in San Francisco for final signing of papers in the settlement with Lita. She had agreed in writing to refrain from any further requests or annoyances in the future. She would receive six hundred thousand dollars and would have possession of the children. There was the provision that the boys would be accessible to their father whenever he wished to visit them or have them as his guests. He must provide separately for them.

Lita has said that after her attorneys and the expenses of her divorce action were paid, her balance was approximately two hundred thousand dollars. A trust fund of one hundred thousand dollars for each of his sons was established by Charlie, the income from them to be used exclusively for their living and education.

Charlie and Kono reached San Francisco, glad to escape the heat and humidity of New York in summer. Charlie was in a fever to get back to Hollywood and shoot the remaining sequences of *The Circus*. This he would be able to do, since the

courts were releasing studio payrolls and equipment. The long battle was over. Presently he would be at work.

Nearly four years later Charlie paid a fine and back taxes to the Federal Government of \$1,060,000.

In San Francisco, Charlie and Kono were given the Presidential suite at the Palace Hotel. While dressing for dinner, Kono noticed that Charlie was preoccupied. Ha, a mood! he thought. Charlie turned in the act of tying his black tie. "I remember something about President Harding and this suite," he told Kono. "You're dressed; go down and find out if he died in these rooms."

Kono gave him a look which was the facial equivalent of an Alaskan winter, but he went to the desk. Charlie's suspicion was confirmed reluctantly by the clerk. The information was relayed to Charlie, who was in a state of nerves by this time.

"What does it matter?" asked the material Kono.

"I'm not a fatalist. You make me tired," was Charlie's retort. He was hurriedly throwing things into his bag as he spoke.

"Telephone Douglas Gerrard," he directed. "I saw him in the lobby as we came up. He's going on to Del Monte to the polo games. I'll go with him. Tell the lawyers to come on to Los Angeles." He dashed out of the room, leaving Kono to the

lone majestic splendor of the rooms of the Presidents.

The Circus was completed at last. The preview was watched from a suburban theater, the final snipping and piecing accomplished. It was ready for the premiere at Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood Boulevard.

The enormous lights of Otto K. Olsen's invention, pivoting from their trucks lined up in front of the theater and across the street, threw their beams skyward; other floodlights brought a daytime brightness to the whole block surrounding the theater. Limousines dashed up to discharge the luminaries of the motion-picture world, producers, directors, and stars galore from every studio in Hollywood, all paying five dollars a seat to do honor to Charlie's new picture and to tell him that whatever untoward happened, he belonged in their hearts.

Charlie escorted Merna Kennedy to the first night; Maisie was there with a party. A microphone, set up on the court with a master of ceremonies presiding, lured various stars to chirp bromides to the world waiting at the radio, the inane, "Hello, everybody. I'm so *thrilled* to be here and know you will be, too, when you see this *wonderful* picture." This has gradually been laughed out of practice.

The prologue to *The Circus* as staged by Sid

Grauman, that master showman, was in itself worth the price of admission. Three rings of circus acts concentrated on the large stage gave the illusion of a full-fledged circus in action. Bareback riders, the noted Paddleford family, trapeze performers, the sawdust, the sideshows, and the barkers overflowed from the stage into the spacious front court and completed the illusion. The ornate gaudiness of the Chinese Theatre fitted the transitory atmosphere of the night.

It is said that when Harry K. Thaw on a visit to Hollywood first viewed the Chinese Theatre, fresh from its wrappings of billboards, he stopped in his tracks and, clapping his hand to his head, exclaimed, "My God! I shot the wrong architect!"

The test of a picture comes not from its Hollywood or even its New York premiere but from the reception accorded it by thousands of smaller theater audiences over the nation. *The Circus* was warmly received, a complete success. No story selected from thousands of themes could have re-established Charlie Chaplin in the affections and esteem of the public so decisively. And the story had been written long before there was a hint of the publicity of divorce.

The final glimpse of the comedian in the picture is of a wistful, ill-favored little chap "seeking romance but his feet won't let him," to a degree of pathos not reached in former pictures. The circus moves on to another town, the girl he loves is mar-

ried to the handsome young chap who comes near to being the villain, who but for Charlie's intervention would have broken the heart of the girl Chaplin loved and who could never love him. Charlie picks himself up from the crash of his vain hopes, struggling valiantly and with bravado to preserve his self-respect.

It is doubtful whether the average star playing the romantic hero could have survived one half the adverse publicity accorded Charlie in his recent trouble. But so closely do people blend the actual personality with that of the screen in his case, that the lonely little figure shrugging off the buffetings of an unkind fate in *The Circus* was a masterful appeal to the tolerance, the chivalry, and the understanding of the civilized.

Occasionally other cavil at the "worm plots" as framework for Chaplin's pictures. The plots do not matter. We remember the characters created by Dickens, the Mr. Micawbers, the Uriah Heeps, the Scrooges, though the story surrounding each be forgotten. And perhaps, in spite of the big shoes, the tight little coat, the bowler, and the ridiculous moustache, rather than because of them, Chaplin's characterization stands as the man of great heart, fine sensibilities, and unselfish love, bolstered by a courage unsuspected by the less ill-favored in appearance.

Charlie received the 1928 award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences "for his

versatility in writing, acting and producing" *The Circus*.

Appended, with apologies for the free translation, are some verses published in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of February 17, 1929:

PACK OF HOUNDS

By ARNOLD ULITZ

Get out the dogs! Hunting time is here!
Many against one! The greatest sport of dogs!
Today you are at liberty, not only to bite,
But tear piece by piece, the highest game.

Let the Philistines come, the day of judgment is here!
The crowd is entitled, today, to put a knife in the heart
Of a great personality; as now Chaplin is down
At the mercy of all.

He put his name, the best of crowns, on a doll's head;
The little mouth of the doll opens
And asks for gold.
The people listen to the sweet little mouth
And spit in the face of the king.

She throws a wonderful name, as food, to the dogs,
She drags a great personality through the mud,
She sits at her dainty little writing table
And writes a diary; on Monday, threats;
On Tuesday, a curse; on Wednesday, a deadly curse;
On Thursday, a forbidden drink and false declaration
of tax.

He trampled on me! Let him pay millions!
Let out the dogs! Call out the Philistines!
You can stone and torture... and whom?

He made a billion people happy,
But made sad the single soul of a doll;
He has given happiness to a world,

But cheated the government of taxes;
He has revealed the depths of existence to mortals,
But he has offended a doll.

Get out the hounds, let them bark about morals.
Only an actual Christian scourge is allowed.
The spirit must be broken;
The doll accorded the attributes of a saint!
Down with Charles Chaplin!

Mother's Death—*City Lights*

THE NEXT three years were spent in writing and filming *City Lights*. The romance with Maisie endured, but as the three years progressed, Charlie became, gradually, more of the observer, less the actor in a drama in which he had accepted a part as a means for escape. There was no marriage to escape from; the romance with Maisie had resolved itself into a routine, scarcely less irksome than an unfortunate marriage could be.

Reporters unaware of his secret involvement with Maisie, pressed him for the date of his marriage to Georgia Hale, with whom he was constantly seen in public. In fact, he had invited Georgia and her mother to live in his home, as his guests, and it was inferred by the newsgatherers that the marriage of Georgia and Charlie was imminent.

Harry Crocker had been on the Chaplin studio payroll as assistant to Charlie during production of *The Circus*. Descendant of Charles Crocker of the Big Four of the Central Pacific Railroad, Crocker was seeking a career of his own making.

He became the victim of an outburst of displeasure from Charlie while they were preparing *City Lights* for production. Charlie, always childlike in his flurries of anger, saw fit to say several uncomplimentary things about Harry, to his face.

"Well, why don't you fire me?" Crocker demanded.

Charlie stopped in his tirade, as if struck by a new and attractive idea. "I will!" he shouted. "You're fired! How do you like that?"

Crocker did not like it at all, but he would wave no white flag. He applied for a job on the Los Angeles *Examiner* and got it. Eventually he became a columnist on the paper, writing the column, *Among the Angels*. Hampered somewhat by lack of something to say and a terse, pungent style in which to say it, he became a target for the abler columnists of Los Angeles. In 1939 he relinquished the role of a Boswell toward Those Who Count and became conductor of *Behind the Make-up* on the same paper. He and Charlie became reconciled. Charlie rarely clings to a grudge.

Charlie's emotional life—which is his real life—can be said to hold in its tragic complexity the elements of a storm. Avid, adventurous, filled with a sort of dizzying uncertainty as to whether destruction or fair weather lies ahead. Nothing with him is ever static. Eagerness for the next quest overcomes the ennui of the waning one;

beauty for him must be always just ahead and quite out of reach.

It was doubly hard for such a nature to watch his mother, whom he loved with a pitying tenderness, follow the slow, tortuous process of increasing insanity. He could have borne with equanimity a sudden violent madness with a climax of suicide or death. But he fled from the knowledge of that which he was powerless to change, the slow, subtle, almost imperceptible disintegration of his mother's mind. He shrank from the sight of her return to childishness—she was not old—which is rarely a beautiful or peaceful transition to watch. He provided her with every imaginable comfort and protection, but he had to lash himself for days before he could get his own consent to visit her at the sanitarium in Glendale (about fifteen miles from his home), where she was under restraint. And for more days after his visit, he would be sunk in a mood of melancholy which frightened those nearest him about his own mental health. It was Kono who was delegated to take Hannah Chaplin on long drives, to the ostrich farm, to the zoo, and to sit by the roadside with her in the car and eat ice-cream cones.

And then, in 1928, about five years after she had been brought to California from England, Hannah Chaplin died. And Charlie was released from the dull, agonizing pain that had lain underneath his sharper sorrows and occasional joy. He was as

suddenly unfettered. He could think of her now with tender sentiment as she had been before the first signs of mental sickness had sent tiny quivering fears into the interstices of his very soul. He could visit her grave and reflect upon the essentials which had bound their lives together, mother and son: the illogical, bewildering, and completely enigmatic alchemy of birth and its consequences.

There has been criticism of Charlie for not visiting his mother oftener when she was alive. Was David Belasco less the fine, sensitive, adoring son—or more the artist—for the incident of his mother's death?

Belasco was, so the story goes, in his study laboring over the script of a new play when the news of his mother's passing was brought him. He stopped in his work, went rigid from shock and grief, emitted a cry from the heart, a cry more indicative of a mortal wound than had been heard in his long career in the theater. Instead of rushing into the room where his mother had breathed her last, he went—to a mirror and practiced the cry! And not until he had securely fixed in his memory the sound and throat contortions for achieving this perfection of technique, did he enter the room where lay the warm but lifeless body of the one he loved best on earth.

In the summer of 1929 when *City Lights* was nearing readiness for production, Charlie, who

has always sought the sea for healing of tired nerves, leased Mary Pickford's house at Santa Monica Beach for the season. It was a roomy, rambling old structure with exclusive beach assuring privacy—or so he hoped.

One day soon after they had moved in, Kono's attention was attracted to a group of men in front of the house with cameras. Suspecting news photographers, he went upstairs to a vantage point and looked them over. They were not newsmen but technicians and cameramen from Paramount Film Company, he discovered. He strolled out upon the beach and was hailed by Alice White, diminutive, blonde whirlwind under contract to Paramount that year.

"Hi, Kono! How's about a drink when I get through being mugged?"

"Sure, sure," Kono agreed. "Come in the side door so you won't disturb Charlie. He's upstairs writing."

Alice appeared after a few minutes followed by another girl, the latter a little bewildered by the hush signs Alice was making as she pushed her through a side doorway and slipped in behind her. Alice was in awe of Charlie, as who wasn't in Hollywood? For it was well known that when he was interrupted in the process of thinking or writing, he could display all the temperament of five combined stars.

The young woman with Alice White was the

tall, lovely blonde, Virginia Cherrill. Miss Cherrill came from Chicago, was a socialite divorcée from that city. She was receiving her alimony checks with comfortable regularity and was unique in Hollywood. . . . She did *not* want to get into pictures! No guile was in Alice White's mind, either, on that warm sunny afternoon.

Kono asked the butler to prepare drinks for the girls. While they were sipping their tall, cool refreshment and Alice was chaffing Kono for a Japanese Puritan because he did not drink, who should come softly down the stairs and into the dining room but Charlie himself. He joined them in a highball while he eyed Virginia steadily. He continued his scrutiny for a brief time, then put down his glass and said, "You're the blind girl in *City Lights*."

"But—but I'm not blind, and I don't know what 'city lights' are—is," stammered Miss Cherrill.

"You're just what I've been looking for," Charlie continued, not bothering to clear up her confusion. "You'll do," he summed up with satisfaction. His attitude was one of relief.

"Here, wait a minute!" she remonstrated, a light dawning. "I suppose you mean a picture. Well, Mr. Chaplin, you're looking right now at probably the only girl in captivity who does not want to be a movie star."

"Nonsense," Charlie returned. He spoke to

Kono. "Take Miss Cherrill to the studio tomorrow for a test."

Virginia grinned helplessly. What could you do against such assurance? "But I can't act," she protested.

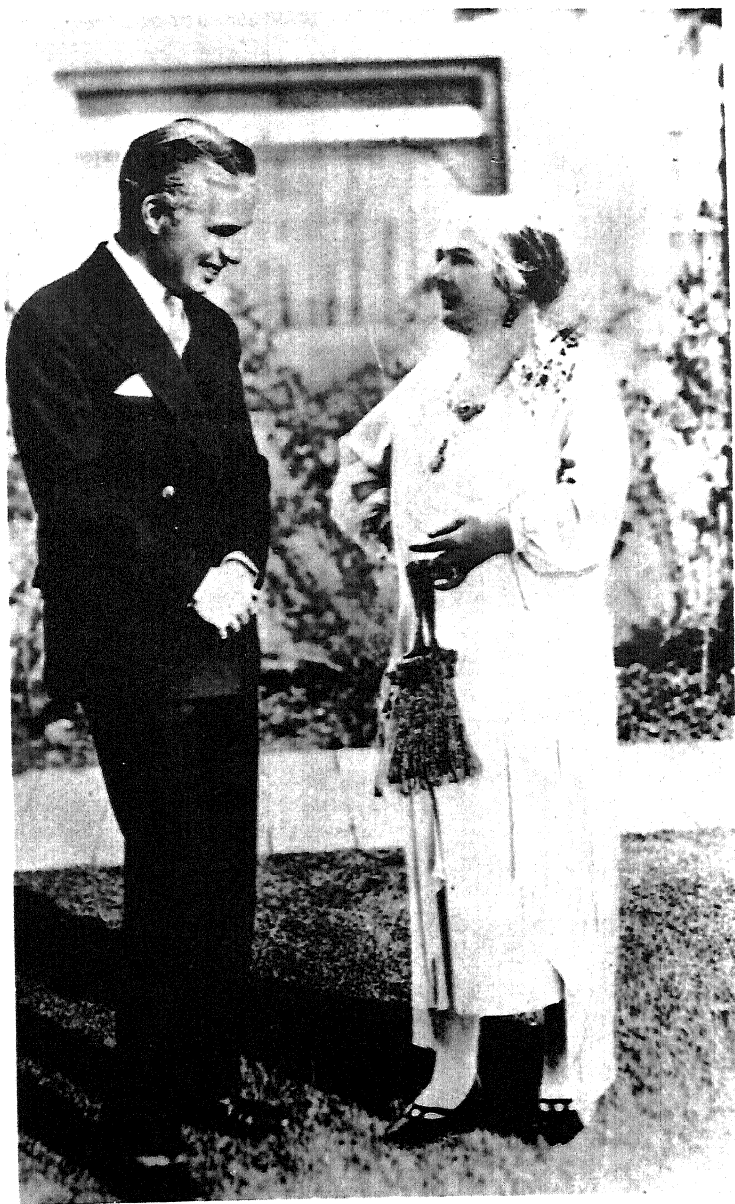
"You'll act—for me," was Charlie's reply, and apparently he had dismissed the matter.

Alice gave her a nudge and said under her breath, "Don't be dumb. That's Charlie Chaplin, you egg. Offering you a screen test. You've heard of Chaplin?"

Virginia laughed off her sarcasm. She'd duck out of the visit to the studio tomorrow, she consoled herself.

The screen test was successful, quite satisfactory to Charlie, and Miss Cherrill was signed to a contract calling for \$100 a week for the duration of production on *City Lights*.

Virginia had never been before a motion-picture camera. She was tall and, so it seemed to her, had a tendency to go all to arms and legs before this one. She had not heard of the nine-o'clock bedtime routine of screen actresses. She had an ample income without her salary. Her screen opportunity had come too easily; she could not appreciate as could an actress who had struggled for years and eaten one meal a day, the opportunity offered to burst upon the screen as Charlie Chaplin's leading lady. Charlie knew she was crude in form but he preferred her that way. He could



Charlie and his mother, Hannah Chaplin, on the terrace of his home in Summitt Drive.



Charlie and his private secretary, Toraichi Kono,
in 1927.



Virginia Cherrill, the blind girl of *City Lights* (1929).

mold her to his pattern. But what he had not counted on was her night life.

She stayed at parties until daylight and appeared on the set looking a bit the worse for wear, unfit for the camera, which catches every drink, every lost hour of sleep, as ably as a special detective.

Shooting of sequences in which Virginia appeared went on for a month with Charlie becoming more and more disgruntled. Finally the inevitable occurred. He flew into a veritable rage one day in the projection room. He wouldn't have it! She was no good! He was going to fire her! Where was she, so he could fire her now!

Kono soothed him as best he could and suggested that he go ahead with the sequences in which Virginia did not appear. In the meantime, he reminded him, they could find the right girl. Secretly he decided to give Virginia a lecture. It was all in line with his abhorrence of drinking.

He went to see her.

"You're foolish to do this," he admonished her. "You're getting Charlie so nobody can stay near him." He went on to explain the cost of producing one of Charlie's pictures and the strain that he was under.

Virginia, chagrined to know that she was unwittingly doing her best to ruin something that was costing the studio a million dollars, promised to take her work more seriously.

Much to Charlie's surprise, she came on the set the next morning she was called, looking fresh and rested, her eyes clear, her hands steady. He watched her carefully through the particular sequence shot that morning and heaved a great sigh of relief. Immediately he gave orders for retakes of the past months' production.

After her triumph as the blind girl in *City Lights*, Virginia followed the precedent of the others Charlie had chosen and fashioned into the guise he must have. A brief contract with Paramount and as an actress she was heard from no more.

A marriage to Cary Grant, and their divorce ensued. And on August 9, 1937, she was married in London to the Earl of Jersey.

Always exhausted at the completion of each picture in which the combined burden of producing, directing, and starring in it is almost too onerous for one human mind and nervous system, Charlie found himself more than usually depleted when *City Lights* was at last released. It was the first picture in which he had made any concession to the new mode, sound. Still convinced that pantomime was his only *métier* as an actor, he had capitulated on the picture to the extent of music synchronized with the action of the film and sound effects in all save the human voice.

He was apprehensive of his venture into the

untried technique all during the making of the picture but had considered it wise to conform to this extent lest the public put down his lack to mere old-fashionedness.

Added to these demands upon his strength were the continued secret meetings with Maisie, whom he was beginning to regard with the accurate appraisal of unclouded perception.

Charlie shut himself in his room at home, went to bed, saw no one but Kono. His meals were brought to him on a tray. But after a week of this he felt no better; something more was needed for his recuperation. He tried to think of an outlet but was invaded by a mass of mingled emotions, confused images, out of which only one objective emerged distinguishable—escape.

"I think I'm going mad," he told Kono.

"You're just tired of everything and everybody," Kono said to him. "Why don't you get out of it—get away?"

After a few more days of retrospection in which a melancholy, a taste of ashes in the mouth, fits of despair with life itself, possessed him, Charlie felt rather than saw the only panacea for himself. He must escape, escape not only from Maisie's deadly bromides but from his own inner, secret life into an external life which had been suspended and which must be taken up again to preserve the fine balance of his being.

He got up from his bed and looked over the let-

ters that had been pouring in from Europe: London, Paris, Monte Carlo, inviting him to be present for the first showing of *City Lights*. There! that was what he wanted to do. It was very simple. He would go abroad.

Kono was instructed to go about the business of trains and booking their passage from New York. Charlie decided to take Kono with him, and Carl Robinson was assigned to him by the studio as publicity director.*

Charlie dreaded telling Maisie of his decision, but when he did she accepted it good-naturedly. She agreed that he needed a change. She would go to Europe, too. Perhaps when they returned they could work out an expedient plan of marriage.

What Maisie could not divine was that Charlie had come to his senses, saw her now as an amusing companion, at times—no more. She did not go deeply enough to know his propensities for idealizing every woman he met whose physical charms appealed to his love of beauty, into the embodiment of all the qualities of mind and heart he wished them to have. Nor did she surmise his stubbornness in clinging to the illusion once built up by his vivid imagination and supported by his passion for an ideal. She did not suspect, even, his powers for complete destruction of this building.

* A publicity director in such a capacity is useful for the news he keeps out of the papers rather than for the stimulation of more stories. A certain twist to an innocent happening can be bad publicity.

None of the women Charlie singled out for unconscious trial by fire could be prepared for the time when the cold, clear light of his intelligence would floodlight the whole substance of his dream, clarifying his own unwisdom as well as illuminating the glaring lacks of the recent subject of his composition.

That this realization had been delayed for six years in the case of Maisie was due in part to causes beyond his control, among them the fact of their necessarily intermittent association. The hours stolen with one another, away from the public gaze and, more necessary, without the knowledge of his rival for Maisie's affections, gave the romance a verve that marriage no doubt would have destroyed long before.

Had Charlie not decided to escape and allow the attachment to languish from malnutrition, the affair might have continued for several years. Yet, in the superficial communion of spirits to which Maisie's lightheadedness limited their association, there was little upon which Charlie's need for complete companionship could have been nurtured. But in every artist's growth there is a mercurylike transference of ideals, friendships, and affections into the planes in which he is currently moving. Just as his first love fed upon the idealism of his younger days until it was made an impossible dream because of the reticence that that idealism provoked; so did the casual and intermittent affair

with Maisie feed upon Charlie's present need for a sympathetic companion, until his need, seemingly impossible to fulfill, was drained of its emotional intensity.

But a sudden intervention of the rival in a comic incident which has long been an after-dinner story in Hollywood terminated the affair in a manner that might have been an emotional cataclysm, had not Charlie's ardor reached so low an ebb that the incident seemed amusing even to him.

Nostalgic Journey

IN NEW YORK Charlie ran across his old friend, Ralph Barton, who, because his wife whom he loved desperately but whom, by his own confession, he could not make happy, had left him. Barton was in that arid state of despair which comes at times to every artist. He was, he told Charlie, exhausted of every creative incentive. Charlie, emerging from the state of subjectivity into the objective, understood this want.

“Leave off trying, Ralph,” he urged him. “Come along to England with me. What you need is a complete change of scene.”

Barton demurred and then, because there was nothing he actually cared to do and because he had reached the stage where he was afraid to be alone, finally agreed to go. He had a genuine admiration and fondness for Charlie. Perhaps absorption in Charlie’s ventures would prove an anodyne.

On the *Mauretania* they sat out on deck late into each night fighting the battle of America versus France versus England. With a good word from each for Russia, which under the Soviet regime

was definitely fostering and rewarding largely, creative work.

"France is more civilized," Barton declared, "than America and England, who keep their artists sublimated to the level of their filthy Puritanism...."

Charlie thought this vitriolic attack a good sign that Ralph was coming out of his lethargy.

"The English are a cold people," Barton complained. "All bound up in archaic traditions and prehistoric customs. 'The tight little Isle.' They're damn snobbish, too."

"Huh, talk about snobbishness," Charlie countered. "You'll go far to beat America with its social registers and its exclusive clubs. They're so busy excluding they find themselves left with a flock of bores. If you can claim two generations of polo-playing in your family, your social position is practically unassailable. In England, at least you've got to stand for some integrity, some value to your fellows...."

And so the battle went on, Charlie and Ralph staying much to themselves on the ship. Charlie had given Kono and Carl Robinson strict orders that he was to be protected from autograph seekers and the curious.

In London the riotous scenes of welcome of ten years before, multiplied rather than diminished, greeted Charlie at Southampton. A battery of

cameras, hundreds of reporters fighting to get near enough for just one statement from him, the frenzied excitement of the mob pushing and shouting, all this warmed him in an affectionate embrace. He loved it. For it is characteristic of him that each time he is inundated by a wave of adulation, it is a new and pleasurable sensation, until his nerves, not his heart, tire of the clamor and rebel.

Mingled feelings of pity and joy clutched his heart as he was half-dragged, half-carried through the boisterous enthusiasm of his own people, the Cockneys, who could in the anonymity of the crowd lose their class inhibitions; he felt joy at the wholehearted welcome after so many years, compassion for the starved lives in which his fame could mean so much.

"These are my people," he murmured to Barton when at last they were safe in their car. "My God! I had almost forgotten how little, aside from the hopeless routine of their existence, comes into their lives. . . . I had forgotten the hunger. . . ."

He turned to find Ralph's eyes filled with tears. The Cockneys' affection for Charlie was to him, too, a beautiful pain. Barton saw beside him in the car now, not the grave, impassive man he had known, his composure leavened with occasional flashes of brilliant, ironic humor, but the little urchin of Kennington Road, come home again.

Once Charlie's party was installed at the Carl-

ton, the avalanche of mail that descended upon them spoke for itself as to his increased popularity since his visit of ten years before. In addition to the to-be-expected notes from the artistic and social world, invitations from great country houses and the letters of friendliness from his fellow artists, there were over sixty thousand letters and telegrams which can be classified only as fan mail, an outpouring from the public who loved him on the screen.

Carl Robinson, who was supposed to take charge of this mail, found its volume, in addition to his duties as director of public relations, too cumbersome for any one man. He engaged a young woman, May Shepherd, who seven years before had handled fan mail for Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks in London. She, in turn, was instructed to employ a number of girls to assist her. This left Robinson free for his press work.

Robinson had himself measured for a morning suit and topper and new dinner jacket from Bond Street and assumed the difficult task of interpreting Charlie's every action into terms of good reading for the press, a task not so difficult in England as in America. Charlie was not fond of Robinson, who was the son of a wealthy, indulgent mother, but was inclined to accept him from the studio personnel for the reason that Carl did not demand the substantial salary asked by most publicity directors.

Kono's time was filled with telephone calls and Charlie's schedule of engagements.

Sir Philip Sassoon, whom Charlie remembered with affection from his former visit, and who was a trustee of the National Gallery and a collector of art himself, offered his services and his hospitality again. Charlie and Ralph dined at his home in Park Lane the night of their arrival. Sir Philip, though no longer secretary to the Prime Minister, Lloyd George having been succeeded by Ramsay MacDonald, was Undersecretary for Air in the latter's cabinet. He hoped to interest Charlie in some of the constructive problems of England. Perhaps, he thought, he could even persuade him to take up residence in his native country. Coupled with these underlying purposes was a genuine liking for Charlie and the desire to make his second homecoming a delightful experience. He had asked Lady Astor, the former Nancy Langhorne of Virginia and now a member of the House of Commons, to meet him. She invited Charlie and Barton to a luncheon at her home on the following day.

Bernard Shaw, of whom Charlie was a little wary, was a guest at the Astors. When the ladies had repaired, after luncheon, to the drawing room, leaving the men at table, Charlie saw that an encounter with Shaw was inevitable, so he braced himself for the attack, determined to keep silent insofar as was possible, and let Shaw carry the

weight of the conversation. But when Shaw, gleeful at the sight of a new adversary, made a direct assault upon him for his lack of propaganda in his pictures, Charlie bristled; he waited. All art, Shaw declared, should have a message and a constructive one. Charlie replied just as emphatically that the object of art as he saw it was to intensify feeling, not to appeal to the moral sense. The conversation died in its brief staccatic intensity, and Charlie was glad to sit back and study the fearless Irishman in his jousts with the statesmen at table.

Sometimes accompanied by Barton, often alone, Charlie escaped from the social round and the calendar of public appearances and wandered the city, reveling in the romantic tradition of the London he was better equipped to appreciate than ever before. For in the ten years intervening between his return home, he had through reading and study reached a maturity of knowledge, yet approached it with the fresh enthusiasm of youth.

The urge to discover for himself the wealth of literature and history had been implanted in his mind by his timid, self-conscious association with men of letters on his former stay in Europe. He had shut himself away from the interminable discussions of pictures, their making, and personalities, in Hollywood, and at the cost of being touted as unsocial had read omnivorously. Homer, Herodotus, Aristotle, Euripides; Horace, Virgil, Seneca;

Dante and Petrarch and Tasso; Moliere, Verlaine, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Balzac; Shakespeare, Macaulay, Gibbon, Carlyle — never stopping as one suggested another, and not mechanically as one seeking a formal education or a mere covering of culture, but eagerly and hungrily and with the freedom of pleasure in ranging through the very stuff of knowledge and seeing for himself how it lived and moved and had its being.

And because Charlie Chaplin, the waif of Kennington, had been born with a knowledge of men's hearts and highest aspirations and basest motives the world of greatness and of degradation opened swiftly before him, and his delight in all of it was overwhelming.

He was now able to project himself into the beings who had made the rich history of England, becoming for the time, Charles I, and suffering with that hapless king the agony of being beheaded, or with equal facility he could become the wistful figure of the Lady Jane Grey, sitting alone with her melancholy child thoughts, in the Tower of London.

"I suppose I've just the soul of a tourist," he apologized to Ralph Barton, who was eyeing him, on one of these excursions, with envy. Barton assured him gravely in reply that he was a fool not to recognize his own attributes as an artist.

Charlie went alone to Lambeth and Kennington Road and West Square, the locale too reminiscent

of his raw, shy suffering as a youth to permit the intrusion of a friend. And there he threw himself, not into the lives of kings and nobles who had become dim marionettes of the distant past, but into the being of a small boy, grubby and lonely and eager for beauty and marked irrevocably by melancholy, a boy who had spent hours with his small nose pressed against shop windows, seeing in each item of the meager enough display of tawdry luxuries and toys for children of the very poor, the unattainable; and his imagination playing with the remote but ecstatic possibility of appropriating these mysterious and colorful things to his own small, beauty-starved life.

Saddened now by the realization that there was nothing in any shop window in the world which could bring him even a fleeting pleasure, he entered a stationer's in West Square where there lay in the window a gaily painted Noah's ark. He bought the toy as amends to the child of so long ago who had wanted passionately, a Noah's ark.

Alastair MacDonald, son of Ramsay MacDonald, First Minister, called and invited Charlie to go down with him to dinner at Chequers, the historical seat of England's prime ministers. Charlie had met Alastair in Hollywood and had looked forward to knowing his father, the Labour Minister. He had read with interest MacDonald's writings on socialism in government.

His disappointment was keen therefore when

MacDonald, already beginning to repudiate many of his former tenets, refused to be drawn out on politics, was dour, preoccupied, and did not seem to think it mattered at all what the beliefs of an actor, even one so famous as Charlie Chaplin, were. A climb to the top of a hill from which they could see miles of the verdant Buckinghamshire country, an almost silent dinner with Alastair trying vainly to entice his father out of his preoccupation and into conversation, and Charlie and Alastair motored back to London, the former depressed from his visit.

Sir Philip laughed at Charlie's annoyance with MacDonald. "He was worried, no doubt, over something that came up today," he told him. "What you want is to meet my chief, Lloyd George. Nobody ever accused him of having nothing to say upon any occasion."

Charlie went with Sir Philip to take tea with Lloyd George in his chambers. The volatile little Welshman *was* more to Charlie's liking despite their widely divergent views upon political panaceas. Lloyd George listened with ill-concealed enthusiasm when Charlie made suggestions for rebuilding the whole southwest quarter of London. Perhaps he expected Charlie to follow his plan with an offer of a million dollars or so as impetus for such an undertaking, for which England would, no doubt, have rewarded him with knighthood. But Charlie has entertained no ambitions for a

title. And in his isolation as an artist, his day-dreams are so significant to him that it is the world of actuality that is vague and unreal. Compelled to enter it by an effort of will, he lives by least resistance in his own shadowy world of imagery.

Lloyd George, fiery little man of action, listened to Charlie until he sensed that with Charlie this talk was nothing more than a satisfaction of his emotional needs, a fulfillment of his frustration as a boy. He fidgeted and suppressed a yawn. Sir Philip took out his watch and reminded Charlie that they must not keep him from his many social demands.

Lady Astor gave a dinner for Charlie at her home, Cliveden. The American-born member of the House of Commons and first woman ever to sit in the Imperial Parliament was first elected in 1919. She has made Cliveden the meeting point for the ablest minds of the age, regardless of views or political creeds. Accused of fomenting sentiment against the straight course of the limited monarchy in England, she has spiritedly denied these accusations and gone serenely ahead playing hostess to widely divergent types and ideas but holding to a Liberal course. She gathered, on this occasion, representatives of each political party at her table, Conservative, Liberal, Labour, Socialist, and Communist. Facing Lloyd George on this evening sat Kirkwood, the Scots Communist, whom L. G., as

he is known to his intimates, had caused to be imprisoned during the World War. All political enmities were forgotten at Lady Astor's.

Speeches were made by everyone who had something to say—or thought he had. Charlie, as guest of honor, was called upon first. He rose and, conquering his self-consciousness to a degree, proceeded to paint a comprehensive word picture of the Utopia he would create had he the power of a Mussolini. He gradually forgot his audience as he threw himself into the speech, which developed into a piercing diatribe against the increase of modern machinery.

His audience was taken aback. The growth of the machine age had been accepted as a natural growth of civilization. Charlie's viewpoint was a departure from this acceptance. They could not know, of course, that here and now was germinated the seed of work within him for the ultimate flowering of his picture, *Modern Times*, the delightful satire on the cruelty of modern invention to man. An artist among statesmen, he felt his isolation and his impotence to joust with them on their own field, but there was some stubbornness in him which would not let him yield.

As he created for the screen for his own satisfaction, so must he talk then from an urge for expression of his dream for an ideal state.

The unbalanced of genius are subject to singular actions which have their origin in the subconscious

mind. Thus, there arise, from the unconscious into the conscious, imperative ideas which insist upon recognition, however malapropos they may appear to the average.

Accompanied by Ralph Barton, Charlie went to visit the orphanage of S——, where he had spent two years—tragic in effect—in his boyhood. He was gratified to find that in the almost forty years since his incarceration there, existence for the inmates had been bettered by more intelligent administration. The children looked better fed, less harshly disciplined, happier. There even appeared to be an effort to create the illusion of a home for the small unfortunates.

Charlie was deeply affected by this reminder of his poverty-ridden childhood. He has much to forgive for the evil fear of poverty that had its inception there at the age of five and has marked him with a penuriousness which is one of his less admirable qualities. He wanted to do something gracious for the children of the orphanage, in remembrance of the little boy who was gone and for the man who, no matter the millions he had, could never buy a single hour of unalloyed happiness for the child he had been.

He spoke to the Head of his impulse. A hurried consultation was held with Barton, and the Head called the children about him. Charlie Chaplin he announced, the same Charlie whom they watched on the screen and who used to live in the

orphanage when he was a boy, would come to see them again, would bring them a cinema projection machine for their very own so that on certain evenings through the kindness of United Artists and other film distributors, they could have pictures, even Charlie Chaplin pictures.

The youngsters, gazing awe-struck at Charlie but finding it difficult to reconcile this smooth-faced, well-dressed gentleman before them with the Charlie they knew to be a funny tramp, raised a jubilant huzza at the mention of his pictures. That part they could understand. This was not all, the Head continued, after another whispered word with Charlie. Mr. Chaplin would bring them, each child, a large bag of oranges, a bag of sweets, and a shilling!—on his next visit, which would be soon. Charlie left with tears in his eyes, silent, wrapped in thought and in remembered feeling.

Kono was told to get from United Artists the finest projection machine that could be had. When several days had passed and Charlie avoided any discussion of his return visit to the orphanage, Barton advised Kono to say nothing further to him about it, but to go ahead and present the gifts in Charlie's name. Ralph Barton understood, as Kono could not, the anguish which had seized him and driven him back into the arid days of his childhood; he knew it was too deep to be fed deliberately with another image of that hurt.

When Kono and Robinson returned to the hotel

after giving the children their treats and recounted the excitement and unaffected gratitude of the youngsters over their oranges, their sweets, and their strange machine that was to give them pictures of their beloved Charlie Chaplin, there stole over Charlie's face an expression resembling peace.

There are those who criticize Charlie for making no gesture toward the permanent well-being of the orphans of S——. On the surface, it would seem that a clinic, or perhaps an endowment so that the boys of outstanding talent might have a better chance, would be indicated. Better housing conditions for Lambeth and Kennington, educational scholarships for some of their boys and girls. . . . Any of these might be had for just one of his several millions.

Most men, it is argued, when they have reached a goal of wealth in excess of their needs, look about for some practical expression of encouragement for their fellows. Of course this gesture is not always above the implication of lulling a conscience which has reason to give its possessor a bit of disquiet.

Charlie Chaplin has had no need to buy off his conscience from himself; he has trodden no heads or hearts into the dust, ground out no sweatshop profits for his own aggrandizement; and he is not a financier. Neither is he the average Horatio Alger hero who started at the bottom and arrived at the top, filled with noble conceptions of his duty

toward his fellow man. He is an artist, with all of the selfishness, the self as center of the universe, that the word implies.

That *he* has achieved success and has not found happiness is not conducive to association of the two in his consciousness. And it is because he is amazingly sensitive to poverty and suffering and because he has a finely drawn appreciation of human values that, conversely, he affirms the futility of any effort toward the preservation of the merely average.

But what of his attitude toward other struggling artists whom he recognizes as having gifts as great, or greater, than his own? For his unconcern in these instances, is there excuse?

He has a friend to whom his own gifts of mind and heart make obeisance; Sadakichi Hartmann, Japanese-German poet and playwright, whose work a hundred years from now will be handled reverently. Charlie knows of the battle against illness and poverty of this great mind embittered by his struggle against almost unsurmountable odds* and of his fearless battle against mediocrity in the face of these odds. Believing Hartmann's *Last Thirty Days of Christ* to be one of the greatest satires ever written, Charlie has lifted no hand to further the work of the play's creator.

* Hartmann's early works were pronounced too revelatory by publishers in his early life (he is in his late seventies). And it appears that he has been consistently punished for his presumption of publishing privately.

By sheer persistence and with the assurance of an artist who knows his own worth, Hartmann was able occasionally to draw the price of one of his books (which sold for from ten to twenty-five dollars) from Charlie. This letter sent from the Hotel Acacia, West Sixth Street, Los Angeles, brought the return of the books. Charlie already owned a copy:

Dear Chaplin

Lend me your ear!

I talked with Kono this afternoon and I do not know whether he was serious or joking. At any rate I don't know whether or not you ever saw the books I left last Monday evening. Kono was inclined to make fun of the price. Of course I do not expect him to know anything about first editions.

The copies in question are almost impossible to get, they belong to my own private set and I sell them only because. . . . As I hoped to get rid of them this week, will you if *you* do not want them by chance give orders to return them by special messenger at my expense as I may have an opportunity to dispose of them on Sunday.

Sincerely

SADAKICHI HARTMANN

To avoid the genial mobbing which often included partial disrobing at his public appearances, it was decided that Charlie and Ralph Barton would slip unobtrusively into the Dominion Theater during the afternoon of the evening scheduled for the opening of *City Lights*. There they would have dinner sent in to them from a near-by chophouse and then dress back stage for the performance.

Charlie grumbled lustily at this curtailment of his liberty but he got no sympathy from the perspicacious Barton. "You'd feel cheated of your natural due if by chance you did arrive at a public function without your tie and your coattails in ribbons," he declared. "Of course I wouldn't be in your shoes, the big ones or the very small neat ones of your dress clothes, for a million dollars," he added with a sardonic grin.

"If you're going to be crass," Charlie grinned, "the reward has been slightly more than a million. But seriously, old man, I do hate this fuss, I ——"

"You know you love it," Ralph contradicted. "You wouldn't change places with the Prince of Wales right now."

Charlie grinned sheepishly. The wine he had had with his dinner had drowned his usual modesty which commodity is, for the artist, put on in a concession to the social amenities, anyway.

"Of course not," he admitted. "The Prince is a great gentleman and a great personality but I—why—I irradiate life! I give new life to people that sorrow and weakness and discouragement have withered. Other men would deny it. I don't. Never deny genius, my boy. It is my joy, it——"

"Hire a hall," Ralph advised him curtly and then burst into uncontrollable laughter. "Your reticence overwhelms me. You think you're pretty swell, don't you?"

"Of course," Charlie returned simply. "Only

I don't think it; I *know* it. There's a vast difference."

Just before the curtain swept back for *City Lights*, they felt their way through the half-light of the auditorium, where they were met by Mr. Gillespie, the manager of the theater. He seated Charlie next to—Bernard Shaw!

Charlie sweated in anticipation of Shaw's incisive invective, but to his amazement Shaw seemed to be enjoying the picture. He was affable, even courteous, all through its showing and refrained from criticizing its lack of "message."

On the way back to the hotel, after the cheers for Charlie had died away and they had been spirited out a side door to their cab, Ralph told Charlie that he was curious to know his honest opinion of Shaw.

"Well, I don't see him as the Mephistopheles the press tries to make him," Charlie replied thoughtfully. "He's just a benign old gentleman with a great mind who uses his piercing intellect to hide his Irish sentiment."

"Humph," was all Barton was able to muster.

"You see," Charlie went on, "all his approach to letters indicates it—those published letters to Frank Harris, for instance. He let sentiment get the better of his relentless judgment."

Carl Robinson and Kono had arranged a large party at the Carlton, after the picture, at which Charlie was to play host to about two hundred guests. Lady Astor, Sir Philip Sassoon, Winston

Churchill and Sybil, Lady Cholmondeley, were among them.

There were speeches after supper, the first by Winston Churchill, who paid a graceful tribute to Charlie's value to the world. "Winston" as he is affectionately known and called by taxicab driver and duchess, in England, spoke with brilliant vigor. His personality has been described by Vincent Sheean as "an army with banners."* In fine fettle that night, he brought out from his "arsenal of words" the precise gun for his kill.

(Mr. Sheean goes on to say, "Mr. Churchill's ordinary speech is on an intellectual and literary level which is bound to intimidate less accomplished talkers.")

Charlie, for whom the excitement and champagne had proved a bit heady, was tremendously impressed but not intimidated. He had listened closely to Churchill's beginning and thought it rather neat. "My Lords, ladies, and gentlemen——"

Presently it was Charlie's turn to respond. He rose to his feet. "My Lords, ladies, and gentlemen——" he negotiated nicely and then, with grandiloquence, looking straight at Churchill as if for inspiration—"my friend, the *late* Chancellor of the Exchequer." He got no further. There were shouts of laughter through which Mr. Churchill's voice boomed with simulated indignation. "I like

* "Old Man in a Hurry—Winston Churchill" in *Saturday Evening Post* of October 21, 1939.

that! The late, the late! So you've killed me off, have you? Ha!"

Charlie was inundated with confusion. He laughed nervously.

"I mean the *ex*-Chancellor of the *Exchequer*," he stammered. "Oh, hang it all, I mean my friend Winston Churchill——"

This by-play was put down to Charlie's wit. At any rate, it had broken the ice of formality, and the party was a hilarious success from that moment.

There was dancing after supper, and Charlie was in his glory because he had met a young dancer brought to the party by Carl Robinson, who danced the tango exceptionally well. He danced with her until Kono sought him out and slipped him a bit of advice. "Let up, let up," he warned him. "The papers will have you engaged by morning, and I haven't got time to spend denying it." But Charlie laughed at him and shrugged off the warning. He was having a good time. Let the papers say what they would. He was going to do as he wished for this brief time. The dark-eyed, exotic dancer was the embodiment of rhythm. Perhaps this woman who divined his love of rhythm was the one——

Ralph Barton lost interest in the excitement of Charlie's visit in London, grew more moody and introspective as the days went on. It was all right for Charlie, he told him, this empty thing called fame; it was quite all right for him, heart-free to play with the fires of surface romance, but when a

chap's very life had stopped because the one woman he loved better than his life did not want to be with him, when the need of that woman consumed him, it was no use pretending to himself. He was going home—where he could look at her occasionally if nothing else.

Charlie understood Ralph's hunger. It was something that had companioned him most of his life. He told him about Hetty, hoping to quiet his overwrought nerves by letting him see that Life had not stopped with him at the loss of Hetty. He begged Ralph to stay with him until time could get in its healing. A prescience of tragedy, in which his friend seemed cast for the leading role, depressed him. If he could only keep him there!

Barton, deaf to Charlie's pleas, sailed for New York and within a few weeks was dead by his own hand. Charlie grieved for a real friend and for the loss of a facile artist to the world.

Charlie was invited to the House of Commons to hear Ramsay MacDonald speak on the subject he had hoped to hear him discuss on his recent visit to Chequers, socialism in government. It had been suggested to the Prime Minister that he give a dinner and a reception a few days later, at which many members of both houses of Parliament could meet Charlie.

Disappointment marked Charlie's ill-concealed reaction to MacDonald's speech. Couched in smooth, almost reactionary phrases, the expressed

beliefs of the Minister irritated him to the point of dislike for the speaker. He informed Kono that evening that he did not care to go to the dinner which was being arranged for his honor. Kono relayed this information to Sir Philip Sassoon.

Now Sir Philip, who seemed to have been peculiarly fashioned to understand men's behavior and the underlying reasons for it, knew that it was not only MacDonald's defection, that it was a number of things, among them Ralph Barton's departure and an impulsive entanglement with the sloe-eyed dancer who had tangoed too well which were all the combined cause for Charlie's discontent.

The dinner and reception date approached, and Charlie displayed an outburst of temperament at each mention of the event. Sir Philip patiently explained that an invitation to dinner from England's First Minister was almost equivalent to a command from the Palace. He got nowhere. Charlie was adamant; he simply would not go.

Sir Philip, though highly amused, as he has said, at this impasse was in a quandary. There could develop from this situation, he told Kono, an incident. And an incident, he added wryly, was the *bete noir* of every diplomat, amateur or professional; more disturbing and sometimes more far-reaching in consequence than a nice, clean murder. Sir Philip further explained to Kono that he might pass this information on to Charlie and remind him of the danger of bringing down the house

of cards so carefully builded about him, his popularity. And, when after a few days it was quite apparent that none of these arguments would weigh a gnat's eyelash against the fact that Charlie did not *want* to go, he told him bluntly that he could not stay in London and at the same time decline the invitation.

Charlie brightened at this suggestion—escape. The Chaplin party left for Berlin.

La Jana—Sociological Awakening

IN BERLIN, Charlie and Carl Robinson and Kono were given the suite in the Hotel Adlon reserved for lesser royalty and the higher nobility in Imperialistic days. Charlie's reaction to this was amusing in its mixture of childlike pleasure and an uncanny penetration of its flattery. He was no vain fool to put undue emphasis on the semblance of rank, nor has he ever been fooled for a moment by sycophancy and the adulation of parasites. Nonetheless, he was put in good humor by this tactful implication by the hosts of the Adlon.

Carl Robinson was irritating Charlie simply by his existence and proximity. The result of this was that he was rarely about when needed and, instead of being an asset to the party, was fast becoming a drag and a worry.

Charlie liked Berlin in spite of the fact that not since the ban on *Shoulder Arms*, during the World War, had Germany shown any of his pictures. He liked the polished streets, the comfortable buildings, and the shining door plates. He felt the need of a long walk to clear his head of the jumble

of the last few days in London; he knew it was hopeless to try to entice Kono on one of his "little walks," so on the afternoon of their arrival, he accepted Carl's offer to go with him, with fairly good grace. Kono had long since been initiated into the endurance contests which Charlie misnamed "walks."

(One day in New York, while they were guests of Nathan Burkan, he had started out bravely enough with Charlie from Ninety-sixth Street and had even kept up, once across Manhattan. At the Battery Kono had drawn a sigh of accomplishment, feeling himself quite a hiker and was innocently looking out for a taxicab when he discovered to his dismay that Charlie had merely stopped for a minute, wheeled—and started back uptown! Kono's pride was aroused. No guy was going to walk him off his feet. He'd stick. He caught up with Charlie, trying to emulate his British swing from the hips.

In midtown Charlie looked about for a Child's restaurant sufficiently uncrowded for them to stop and eat pancakes [a favorite dish of his] without danger of being mobbed. Kono prayed to all of his Nipponese gods for some excuse for food or rest; his legs moved automatically by this time, seemed to have no connection with the rest of him. But he was doomed to disappointment. There were too many people in the cafe whose plate-glass windows showed heads turned excitedly toward them.

Charlie strode along, no trace of tiring in his easy gait.

Eventually they reached Ninety-fourth Street, just two blocks from home, when Kono gave out, collapsed on the steps of a friendly house. Charlie came out of his absorption and was all contrition and helpful suggestions. "We'll get a taxi," he said. Kono laughed hysterically. "For two blocks?" he sputtered. "Go away. Leave me here. I'll walk. If I'm not back by tomorrow, send a hearse."

Charlie, relieved of his weakling companion, wheeled and started back toward Forty-second Street—to get pancakes! After half an hour's rest on the steps of the strange house, Kono was able to stagger home. He stayed in bed all the next day.)

Kono, now left alone in the Adlon suite, was ordering himself a simple dinner when there came a knock at the door. Thinking it was another of the hotel staff coming to see if they were comfortable, he called "Herein!" his lone German vocabulary. The door opened, and it was no prosaic member of the hotel staff who came in, but two beautiful and smartly groomed young women. They were actresses, they informed Kono, mentioning their names, which, it was apparent to him, they expected him to recognize. One of them spoke English, the other misled by Kono's erudite "herein" let fly a barrage of German that left him bewildered. The former announced that they had come to call upon Mr. Chaplin.

Kono's fatigue vanished, as did all thoughts of an early retirement. He invited the girls to dine with him, assuring them that Mr. Chaplin would be back eventually. They accepted, and he ordered an elaborate dinner with wines for the three of them sent to the salon. He chuckled to himself as he anticipated Charlie's surprise when he returned.

Within the hour Charlie appeared, ill-humored over his enforced companionship with Robinson, brooding over and magnifying to a dramatic point, his supposed defections. He burst into his bedroom shouting to Kono, "I want him fired. He's a nice guy, but I don't like him. My God! Why do I have to have people around me I don't like?"

"Sh-sh!" Kono held his finger to his lips. "Look what's here." Charlie followed him into the salon where he looked inquiringly at the girls, then back at Kono. He was introduced after a fashion and his manner showed no trace of the irascibility of a moment before. He charmed the young actresses into hilarity, without benefit of German, slyly poking fun at Kono the while for having, as soon as his back was turned, appropriated so much that was ornamental to himself without stirring from his chair.

The dinner finished, it became apparent to Kono by means of eyebrow telegraph that Charlie would like to have him take the actress who spoke no English but who was somewhat a linguist in smiles, and get the hell out, leaving him alone with the

other who, it developed, was La Jana, a Viennese dancer of some note.

Kono suffered an innocuous evening of smiles between the acts of a play of which he understood not a word. He was relieved to deposit his share of Nordic beauty at her home.

Not so, Charlie. La Jana was adept at social dances as well as professional ones. They had spent the evening at a night club, and Charlie came back to the hotel even better pleased with Berlin.

La Jana was included thereafter in the parties Charlie attended. Karl von Vollmueller, the poet known popularly for his *Miracle*, which brought fame to Max Reinhardt as producer, invited Charlie to the theater and to supper afterward in his apartment. It was the sort of party at which Charlie is at his best. There was no formality. Composers of musical comedies gave sketches, and snatches of their melodies at the piano; von Vollmueller read them his exquisite verse; La Jana danced solo to a gramophone. And Charlie was prevailed upon to give his inimitable impersonation of a timid matador at a bullfight. This characterization, done with abandon before a group of broadminded intelligentsia is about as waggish a bit of buffoonery as one could see, on or off stage. The whole group at von Vollmueller's were reduced to helpless laughter.

Sir Philip arrived in Berlin, ostensibly for an innocent visit with Charlie, but actually in the

role of a mentor to see that a message to the Prime Minister of England was properly worded and promptly dispatched. He was a keen judge of people and knew well that Charlie would not, and Kono and Robinson could not, handle this delicate situation with the subtlety for which it called. He concocted a wireless saying that Mr. Chaplin had been called away to Germany on urgent business and couched it in such language as to make plausible Charlie's unceremonious departure from London, though he was quite aware that no excuse would be accepted with full pardon.

Sir Philip then accompanied Charlie and Kono to Potsdam as guests of Prince Henry of Prussia, nephew of the former Kaiser. They lunched in the picturesque town which had lost much of its glamor with the departure of Germany's royalty and then proceeded to the Palace, the erstwhile second residence of the German Crown.

Charlie was frank in his disapproval of the huge seventeenth-century quadrangular pile. "It would be beautiful," he told Prince Henry, "but for those ridiculous figures that teeter on the cornices. They're for all the world like acrobats and not well balanced, therefore not art."

Prince Henry was amused.

"You're quite right, old man. They're rather hideous, but you'll have to blame old Wilhelm I for that. Frederick the Great thought the palace bad, too, and built himself a retreat in the eighteenth

century which, I am sure you will agree with me, is very nice. Though he and Voltaire both lived in your acrobats' pedes."

They strolled across the Havel, into the terraced gardens of *Sans Souci* and Charlie immediately recognized the prototype of many self-conscious eastern American estates. Great was his glee over Voltaire's room, which Frederick had caused to be papered with parrots, when he had become weary of the latter's interminable talk.

Browsing among the personal relics of the great Frederick, Charlie felt the glories and the tragedies of the man, who, though he was Emperor, had the courage to be, also, a musician. He could see with his mind's eye the reign of that unhappy monarch, the intrigue, the music and letters which he fostered; could people the palace with men who had, with lace at their wrists, filmy handkerchiefs tucked in their sleeves, and the sheerest of silk stockings encasing their legs, left much that is virile and great in German art.

Charlie was awed by the gardens in which man had captured nature, as any unformed material, and fashioned it into line and proportion and color.

Charlie's next excursion was aimed at a cafe. He writes: "There are all sorts of wild rumors as to what goes on in these cafes, men dressed as women. . . . So we arranged to go to a certain cafe where we could see things unprintable."

This from a dweller in Hollywood!

"I must say I was disappointed," he complains naïvely in a women's magazine. "It was a most feeble entertainment and very self-conscious in its naughtiness. As we entered the band struck up and two effeminate youths danced together. This was the big noise, the something unspeakable we were privileged to see. . . ."

Charlie, though essentially normal himself, could not be the creative person that he is and not have an understanding of many of his fellow artists. He knows that it has been these exponents of the intermediate sex who have dominated art through the centuries, that it is these

"... hearts washed marvelously with sorrow, swift
to mirth;

Dawn is theirs and sunset, and the colors of the
earth."

who have stirred men's highest emotions and quickened their hearts with the gathered radiance of immortal art.

Charlie's evening at the Berlin cafe was a flop. The Cook's tour of iniquity is seldom amusing.

Charlie was invited to have tea with Einstein, whom he had entertained in Hollywood. He was faintly surprised to find that the eminent scientist, who was honored by the greatest minds in science and who was the friend of kings, should live in the small but comfortable flat of the average German

workman. Here were no superficialities, no deviation from the simplest living. Einstein is of a genial nature, and his late wife was essentially a motherly person and a charming hostess.

He was served home-baked tarts by Mrs. Einstein. The son and daughter of the house came in, the latter, Margot Einstein, a sculptress of note, the boy still in college. Young Einstein remarked upon the psychology of the popularity of his father and that of Charlie. "You are popular," he told Charlie, "because you *are* understood by the masses. On the other hand, my father is popular with the masses because they do *not* understand him."

"How do you account for that?" Charlie inquired. "I have seen it demonstrated that people are suspicious of anything they do not understand and are prone to condemn, without hearing, the man who is beyond their understanding."

Young Einstein smiled. "Ah, but you forget. . . . *Natürlich*, science to the layman is a vast enigma. They accept as a whole the publicized greatness of my father in a field of which they can know little."

Frau Einstein, at home and feeling less restraint than when she had been overwhelmed by the lavish entertainment of Hollywood, was utterly lovable. Charlie felt that he was in the presence of a woman no less great of heart than her famous husband. She was warmed by Charlie's obvious admiration

of her and was encouraged by him to talk of Herr Einstein's sensational discovery of the principle of Relativity. "You see, my dear husband is very lazy," she said in her rich, warm voice. "When he is not working, he putters about with his sailboat, or the piano. But when he has an idea, he shuts himself up in his study for days at a time, alone. One morning he came out after such a time, looking worn and tired. He sat down at the piano and ran his fingers over the keys. I did not speak nor did I make any wifely suggestions as to what he should do . . . did not suggest that he bathe or rest, or even offer him coffee . . . just waited. . . . Suddenly he turned to me, his eyes shining with excitement. 'Do you know, Mama, I have just got a wonderful idea!' he exclaimed. (You see he is something like a novelist fumbling for a long time for a plot while everybody says, 'What a lazy fellow!') He went back to his study with no further word to me and came out two days later with his theory of Relativity developed. He is like that." She beamed at her husband, who obviously adored her. There was the feeling of *Gemütlichkeit* in the room.

Prohibition was discussed, and Einstein, who has a sharply drawn sense of humor, was still chuckling over the advice of Eugene P. Brown in the Los Angeles *Times* wherein he suggested that William Randolph Hearst employ Einstein to get rid of Prohibition in America. "Anyone who can repeal the law of gravity," quoth Mr. Brown.

"ought to be able to do a little damage to the Eighteenth Amendment."

The conversation veered toward the economics of the world, the depression. Charlie was possessed of the ideas which had taken root in his mind on his travels and he must try them out on statesmen and scientists alike. There was a touch of bravado in his taking to himself the temerity of expounding proposed cures for the ills of the world. He has that childlike quality of the artist who says to himself, "It is not enough that I am an artist. I will prove to these people that I am a many-faceted fellow, at home in any field."

"These are dangerous times,"* Einstein admitted, "what with the depression and growing unemployment."

"England was hopeless of paying her national debt after the battle of Waterloo because of lack of trade," Charlie offered. He enjoyed listening to his own reflections quite as much as he expected others to enjoy them. "But steam came along and started new industries; then electricity was developed and put more men at work. Depressions came periodically in the past, but new enterprises cropped up—the automobile, the radio, aviation—and for a time absorbed the surplus workers."

The *Herr Professor* listened gravely.

* It did not occur to any of the group that before many years, the great scientist would be deprived of his property by the Nazi government and forced into exile from the country to which he had brought so large a measure of honor.

"The trouble is that the population has quite outnumbered the need for workers," Charlie went on. "Modern machinery has decreased the need for manpower. Therefore, since man's only means of buying what machinery produces, is money made from work at those machines, our problem becomes a difficult one."

"A radical change of some sort is necessary," Einstein agreed, "to keep men from starving."

"The business world has welcomed the change from manpower to machine which, in cheapening the cost of our commodities, has put the luxuries of yesterday within the reach of the man of moderate means today. But the business world stands resolute against any fundamental change in the capitalistic system which might cheapen money."

Einstein smiled. Charlie's radical leanings—though he usually held them in check—were well known to his friends.

"They insist upon using the gold standard," Charlie complained, "and at the same time doing business with credit. These two mediums of exchange—credit and gold—will never stabilize prices, for credit is more elastic than gold."

The professor smiled again. "You are not a comedian, Charlie; you are an economist. How would you cure these ills?"

"With three things," replied Charlie, promptly. "Reduce the hours of labor, print more money, and control capital."

"I'm not much of a business mathematician," Einstein confessed, "but I do hold that every living man should be clothed and fed and have a roof over his head. There is enough for all."

On Charlie's last evening in Berlin, La Jana, Sir Philip Sassoon, and Charlie made up a small party for dining and dancing at a club where the music was good and the floor not too crowded for the swaying gestures of the tango. Charlie loved tangoing and he was enamored not so much of the dancer as of her dancing. To him La Jana "wore at her heart the white fire of her art," and her least movement was a melody.

Their farewell came at the end of the evening. Sir Philip had left for London. Charlie and La Jana sat and talked, each an artist, each weighted with the loneliness at the core of his life. Their thoughts had touched for a brief moment; there was no jealousy, no culmination of an *affaire* to mar the grave joy of two artists face to face. La Jana sat quietly while Charlie searched for the right words in which to put his appreciation of her rhythm.

"In your dance," he said, "you express an exotic loneliness, as if none was capable of following your rhythmic perfection. . . ."

Much affected, La Jana finally spoke. "Charlie, I love you. I find so little real appreciation of what I am trying to express. Although we may never see each other again, I am content. We have met,

two lonely souls, in a confused pilgrimage... where? But it is good to know you are in the world."

Charlie, Robinson, and Kono moved on to Vienna. Outside the Hotel Imperial, when they arrived, thousands crowded about under the balconies, clamoring for a glimpse of their Charlie. He appeared on a balcony, waved and bowed and shouted to them. The Viennese were satisfied and dispersed as quickly as they had gathered when the evening papers had heralded the news of his coming.

The Austrian capital, connected in Charlie's mind with light-hearted gaiety, was, in the next few days, a disappointment. To him Vienna was imbued with the desolation of a ballroom with the dancers gone. As in Prussia, much of the glamor had faded with the discarded throne; the colorful pageantry of royalty and its attributes was missing; the people saddened and depressed and struggling against an economic upheaval with its resultant bitter poverty. Always sensitive to moods of people and cities, Charlie's imagination intensified the gloom. He saw in it a personal adversary ready to hurl itself upon him.

Escape was offered when a member of the French Legation at Vienna called and told him that Aristide Briand, premier of France, was eager to meet him as soon as he could arrange to come to Paris.

So, instead of a comprehensive tour of Italy as he had planned for this time, he prepared to return to France, stopping for only a day or so in Venice.

Charlie had heard nothing from Maisie since he left New York but he half expected to find her in Venice. It would follow her concept of the pattern of romance, he told Kono. But she was not there. He drew a sigh of relief.

Maisie's absence, however, was not enough to soothe his frayed nerves. Carl Robinson, probably through little fault of his own, was becoming more of an annoyance to Charlie. Charlie was tired of the inevitable excitement attending his tour of Europe, of the sensation of each fresh arrival to a country, of being constantly on exhibition. He heartily and audibly wished himself back in the quiet seclusion of his California home, where Kono with rocklike stolidity could stand between him and the invading public, without offense to, perhaps, a whole nation. "What," he inquired fretfully of Kono, "did I come on this damned holiday *for?*"

"To get away from love," was Kono's blunt rejoinder, keeping a weather eye out for a hurled book or cushion. "Go to bed for a day or two," Kono advised him. Charlie who realized that life to Kono was translated into few outlets—making money, eating, and sleeping—ignored this advice. He countered with his own remedy: a little walk.

Kono, doggedly faithful to the charge he so little

understood, offered himself as sacrifice, and they started an exploration of Venice with occasional stops for refreshment. For hours Charlie walked in silence, drinking in the medieval architecture of Venetian line and color, feeling the dark potency of its retrospective glamor, peopling the town with the cruelty and elegance of the Doges' reign.

Venice, despite his mood of restlessness, began to take hold upon him. He walked the next night with Kono and a friend who spoke Italian. He says of this walk that evening: "The streets of Venice are just as beautiful as its canals. We wandered through the labyrinth of narrow thoroughfares, some so narrow they barely permitted the three of us to walk abreast. The day noises had ceased, the hour was midnight. There was only the lapping of the water disturbed by some late gondola, the sound of an occasional footfall. In the dim lights of the old street lamps, we could see the outline of a cloaked figure passing into the shadows. We came out into a palazza where there were groups of young men standing in animated conversation. I lag behind the others to watch one group which from their intense interest must be discussing the charms of woman. I call my friend and ask him to translate just one remark which will give me the key to their conversation. This is the phrase I got, 'Art is the treatment applied to work, I tell you, and has nothing to do with the subject matter.'

"I went to bed that night encouraged with life and possessed of a passionate belief in the Italian people."

Charlie wanted to get on to Paris. Kono was somewhat at a loss to understand his feverish impatience to see another prime minister when he had been hardly extricated from the toils of the first. Charlie disclosed his reason on the train to Paris. The Legation members in Vienna had hinted that it was the intent of France to decorate him with the ribbon of *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur*. They wanted to express their homage to him as an outstanding contributor to the happiness of the world.

The Duke and Duchess of Westminster had also boarded the train in Venice, en route to their hunting lodge in Normandy. Learning from train officials that Charlie was in another carriage, they sent to ask if they might present themselves to him. Charlie was gracious, and the Duke invited him to his annual boar hunt. In spite of a warning nudge from Kono, Charlie fell headlong in with this suggestion, agreed to let them know when he could conveniently get away from Paris for a few days.

"We'll have a boar steak or something," he informed Kono enthusiastically when their graces had returned to their own carriage.

"Oh, yeah?" Kono retorted. "You mean the

boars will have Chaplin steak. What the hell do you know about hunting?"

Charlie sulked. It was never quite clear to him why he put up with a secretary who never soared above the level of the earth. He could hunt boars, he muttered, and probably shine at it, too.

Paris again! A repetition of crowds stampeding the barriers erected by the watchful police. Eventually the party reached the Crillon, though somewhere along the way Charlie had lost his hat and part of his necktie. They were given the rooms which had been occupied by the late President Wilson on his League of Nations pilgrimage, just after the World War.

While awaiting word of the ceremony of decoration, Charlie was informed by the Belgian Embassy that Albert, King of the Belgians, in temporary residence at the Embassy, had expressed a desire to meet him. Charlie readily agreed to accompanying the messenger to Albert's quarters.

After signing the guest book in the anteroom, Charlie was ushered into the royal presence. King Albert acknowledged the introduction briefly, then pointed to a chair for Charlie and drew one forward for himself before the usher could spring to do so. Then King Albert said—nothing.

Charlie, unschooled in the etiquette of court, even a temporary one, and not counting it important anyhow, then had the temerity to attempt to put the King at his ease. "It's a great honor, a

pleasure to meet you," he said. The King merely nodded. Charlie, nothing daunted, tried again. "You're not staying long in Paris?" he asked.

"No," replied Albert.

"I understand you flew here," Charlie further ventured.

"Yes," said Albert.

Charlie was a little annoyed by now. He squirmed. After all, an enforced monologue can be disconcerting. He essayed a few tentative remarks on airplanes. Albert looked dreamy, ignored them. And at long last, quite as if Charlie had not spoken, His Majesty, Albert of Belgium, *began* the conversation.

"Do you make all your pictures in California?" he inquired with a cordial smile.

Charlie, after stammering an affirmative, sat back. He had received a full education, in one lesson, in royal etiquette. He was soon at ease with the genial, and beloved by all the world, Albert of Belgium. For an hour they talked easily and companionably of pictures, science, and art. Charlie left with the conviction that King Albert was not only a great king but also a man of parts.

Napoleon's tomb, in fact, any and all Napoleonana, had always held an especial fascination for Charlie. Perhaps it was the slight physical size of the mad genius of battle which had first attracted his interest. He spent hours now on the balcony

overlooking the catafalque of the Emperor, ruminating on the dramatic splendor of his sweep through Europe, upon the acute unhappiness and loneliness of the man. For years Charlie has cherished the hope of playing Napoleon on the screen. But he is afraid. He has seen comedians of the first water laughed out of their attempted serious roles.

A Boar Hunt

CHARLIE soon found himself at the Normandy château of the Duke of Westminster, though why he had accepted the invitation, he began to wonder. He certainly regretted his rash decision to join in the hunt of the boar, an ugly-tempered animal, almost as soon as he was comfortably ensconced at His Grace's hunting box. It was bitter cold weather, but this was not the reason for the mysterious chills that crawled up his spine as they sat, a goodly number of guests and their host, around a great fire the first evening, sipping Scotch and soda.

"Of course you can ride," the Duke remarked.

"Oh, of course—that is—I haven't for ten years." Charlie thought he detected a note of concern in the Duke's manner and hastened to reassure him. "You see, I've never really fallen off a horse—yet."

The boar hunt was explained to the only novice in the group. Men are first sent out to ferret out the tracks of the boar. The hunters then ride to a spot near the locale of the animal's hideaway as

determined by its tracks. The hounds are loosed, and when it becomes apparent that they have caught the scent, the horn sounds and the hunters gallop full upon the hounds, each one intent upon being the first to be upon the brute and drive home the spearlike knife he carries.

"You get off your horse for this," the Duke explained. "But be sure not to dismount until the boar is securely pinned down by the dogs."

"Oh, quite," Charlie muttered. "One does not want to rob the dogs of their share of the fun." Why am I such a jackass? he inquired of himself.

"The boar is a ferocious animal, most dangerous. If the dogs haven't him down securely, he's apt to jump up and attack you."

Charlie gulped. He was sure by now he should have stayed safely in Paris.

"In fact," the Duke continued, "I've known them to attack a horse, but there, I'm talking too much. We may not get even a glimpse of a boar tomorrow, and then you'll be disappointed."

"Oh, no—I mean—yes, yes, of course. Oh, no, not at all," Charlie stammered his confused assurances.

Everyone retired early in order to be up and fresh at six o'clock the next morning.

Poor Charlie, with visions of a boar—he'd seen one in a book—romping across his mind, slept not a wink. By morning he was in condition for nothing but a hot bath, a sedative, and a long nap. His

bones ached, his eyes smarted, and he was sure his brain had gone from his cranial cavity leaving only a small piece of lead in the vacuum. Calling upon all his reserves of fortitude, he dressed and went downstairs, where he was cheered with the news that the boar tracks *had* been found. But boars and their tracks were forgotten for the moment when the assembled guests and the host beheld the apparition that was Charlie! His hunting costume! True, they struggled against rising mirth, but when Charlie actually caught a glimpse of his ensemble in a long mirror, he roared with laughter and thus allowed the choked merriment of the assembly to burst its chains of politeness.

He had bought breeches and boots which fitted him as well as stock sizes could be expected to fit. But, having no coat or helmet or yellow waistcoat—without which no true son of Britain would be caught dead at a hunt—he had made up his costume from here and there. Sem, the French caricaturist, had left his pink coat at the *château* from a previous hunt, and Sem was several sizes smaller than Charlie. The Duke, who was about three inches over six feet, and broad proportionately, had sent up one of his waistcoats, also his helmet and gloves.

The ensemble was so ludicrous that Charlie seriously considered its possibilities in a picture—a hunting picture. Sem's coat barely met about his middle, the voluminous waistcoat under the but-

toned coat reached almost to his knees and pinched in by the coat, had a ballet-skirt flare. "When I reached for a match," Charlie said, "I looked as if I were pulling up my socks." The Duke's gloves were so large that his hands looked like small hams, and he could double up his fists inside them without disturbing the fingers. He looked out from under a helmet which, relative to his size, could have served for a tent.

Once on the horse, Charlie found that the Duke's secretary had been assigned to him as mentor and guard. They jogged placidly enough along through the brisk morning air across the smooth downs, until Charlie began to feel that a hunt was a pleasant affair after all. However, he bowed to his apprehension of the unknown enough to hazard a feeler.

"I suppose we go—er—faster than this?"

"Oh, quite. When the horn sounds, y'know."

They were approaching a lane flanked by tall oaks when, without warning, bugle notes ripped the morning stillness. Charlie's horse broke and was off to a flying start. Clutching vainly for his paraphernalia of whip and spear and reins, he lost them all, lost everything but a desperate grip about the horse's neck. He choked, and he was sure it was on the horse's ear.

Through the forest, around trees, over ditches and small streams the horse sped, with Charlie clinging for dear life to his embrace. Finally he

came up with his companion, who had stopped his mount. He retrieved his reins, and as soon as he was able to think, he decided that he *was* an excellent rider after all. Was he not still *on* the horse? He confided this discovery to the secretary.

"I wouldn't ride too hard," that worthy advised.

"I wish you'd tell that to the horse," was Charlie's quick retort.

For hours—days, it seemed to Charlie—the whole forest was thrashed for the elusive boar. The brief respites while waiting for the next sound of the horn, were savored by Charlie as the last sweet moments of life, he felt, must be, by the condemned. At long last, when he was beginning to be sure that it was a horrible nightmare and he could not wake up, the Duke rode up and exclaimed, apologetically, "It looks bad. I'm afraid we're out of luck, today."

Charlie tried valiantly to look disappointed but apparently succeeded only in looking ill. "Look here, old man," the Duke said solicitously. "You're tired. Don't overdo it. Take my car and go to the house."

Commutation from the guillotine to life sentence could not have been sweeter in Charlie's ears. He turned his mount and requested him with soothing words to *walk* down the lane to the car. Happily the horn did not sound.

Awaiting him at the car was a reporter. Charlie was furious. Well, he'd show him. Affecting a jaunty air, he nonchalantly threw his right leg

back from the saddle and jumped lightly to the ground. His knees gave way completely. He sat down suddenly and hard! Struggling for dignity, he tried to stand, but again they buckled and down he went. With effort he struggled to a comparative upright position, but the muscles of his back, punished by hard riding, refused to support him. He flopped in a crumpled heap to the earth. Half-crawling, half-sliding, he managed to reach the running board of the car and sat down. His imagination tortured him. Would he ever walk again?

The reporter, suppressing his laughter, came up, notebook in hand. "Did you enjoy the hunt, Mr. Chaplin?"

"Rather!" Charlie answered with what he hoped was enthusiasm.

"Did you see a boar?" was the next question.

Charlie looked at him, said nothing. He wished for just one moment of the privileges of a private citizen, the glorious right to be rude, as he stifled the reply, "No, but I'm looking at one, right now."

Rescued by the Duke's chauffeur, he was taken to the château, where Kono had been taking his exercise in a chair. After dinner they left for Paris, and Charlie disappeared into a Turkish bath and emerged from the hands of a masseur at four the next morning. Even then, it was a matter of three days before he could sit or stand without groaning. He would confine his participation in sports in the future, he declared, to tiddlywinks.

The Riviera—May Reeves—Marseilles

TO CHARLIE from the Frank Jay Goulds in Nice came an invitation to visit them at the Majestic Hotel, which with the Casino was owned by Gould. The Casino rivalled Monte Carlo near by with its lavish appointments and the added attraction of a floor show. The gay season of the Riviera was in full momentum, and Frank Gould's resort was the mecca of the American expatriates and English visitors to the Mediterranean.

Syd Chaplin and his wife, Minnie, had been living in Nice for the past six months, but as they had only a small apartment, Charlie was glad to accept the proffered hospitality of the Goulds.

Syd had ended a moderately successful film career in Hollywood when income tax investigators began to imply that his tax returns were not adequate. He had gone first to England but soon saw there no surcease from the annoying matter of taxes, and had decided that the climate of southern France was more conducive to well-being. Possessing a comfortable fortune—though nothing to compare with Charlie's millions—he decided that

if he could just keep what he had, it would be discreet to retire from public life.

Charlie and Carl Robinson and Kono arrived in Nice and were greeted with an enthusiasm which, for Charlie, was taking on staleness from repetition, but which astounded the Goulds. "It must make you very happy to be so admired," said Frank Gould after they had escaped, breathless and disheveled, into the lobby of the Majestic. Charlie made no comment, but after luncheon he impishly invited Gould to go with him to a shop for tennis racquets. As they walked, a crowd assembled out of nowhere, growing in volume with each few steps advanced until its proportions had stopped all the traffic and the streets were a hubbub of pushing, milling people shouting, "Charlot! Hurrah! Charlot!" The mass became so dense that it was with difficulty that either of them moved forward a step. Charlie stole a look at Gould's face and saw growing annoyance and alarm and extreme concern for him. When they had eventually reached the shop as exhausted as football players, Gould mopped his face and declared fervently, "Whew! I wouldn't be you, my dear Charlie, for all the gold of the national debt."

Charlie was taken that afternoon to the Casino for tea. He discovered many of the well-known names of America scattered about him. The main topic of conversation seemed to be a loud denunciation of Prohibition and other must-nots of or-

ganized Puritanism. The Europeans who had taken these freer souls to their hearts agreed that though they watched America with interest always, her contributions to science and inventions, it was surely no country for those of the *monde*.

There was, starred on the bill of entertainment at the Casino, a young dancer, French-English and of an exotic Latin beauty. She was billed as May Reeves.

May's face was heart-shaped, her eyes soft brown and luminous, her hair dark, and her figure sinuous. Her dancing was grace itself. She appeared to the fashionable habitués of the winter playground as a young woman of complete sophistication, but in reality, as Charlie was to learn, she was lacking in experience to deserve this characterization. It was all a pose.

Charlie was bored with the Casino life as it appeared to him that first afternoon, thought it rather dull and silly, but he was instantly struck with the charm of May Reeves. Syd assured him that he knew her and could bring her to see him. It was decided to show her no marked attention at the Casino. It would not be tactful to show too much attention to one of his host's employees. So, just before luncheon the next morning, Syd and Carl Robinson appeared with May. Charlie was charmed by her English, spoken with quaint accent and an attractively awkward arrangement of phrases, as well as by her youth and naïveté. He discerned

that for all her air of sophistication, she was shy, unworldly, in a word, amazingly innocent.

Charlie grew interested in May Reeves, in her fresh, unspoiled beauty, and most of all, in her dancing. His interest was sustained by her aloofness. He played tennis* with her every morning, and she gave him an excellent game. He watched her dance in the evening at the Casino, invited her occasionally to their table for a drink and a chat—and that was all. Finally he asked her to go with them to Morocco and Algiers. She consented. Why not? The season on the Riviera was ending. She needed a rest, and there would be chaperones.

Mary Garden and the Duke of Connaught, great uncle to the then Prince of Wales, each invited Charlie to tea, at Cap Ferrat.

Another renewal of friendship delighted him; it was with Elsa Maxwell, that unique impresarianne of the party whose originality had resulted in changing dull and stately receptions and balls into wacky gatherings somewhat resembling mild riots, but, withal, a lot of fun. Miss Maxwell, short, stout and pudding-featured, impeccably frocked by Europe's famous couturières—and still a frump—is a triumph of personality over bank balance. She ruthlessly jarred American society loose from its fond convictions that three generations of dubiously gotten wealth presupposed charm and

* Tennis has long been Charlie's only form of exercise aside from walking. He is a spectator at all the national tennis matches.

other ingredients for social superiority. She convinced them that personal achievement in the arts, and professional distinction, or even just being amusing, were more logical entrance cards to the charmed circle in a supposedly democratic country than mere riches.

On the barren canvases of parties, Elsa Maxwell splashed—and still splashes—lavish color. As a beginning she flung her repertoire of songs (of her own composition) not to the favored few, the artists who revel in an occasional abandonment to Rabelaisian humor as a divagation from their effete pursuits, but to the stuffed shirts who could take her downright, spontaneous hell-raising—or go home. They did not go home.

She was the prototype for Dwight Fiske, who afterward set the sophisticated world a-chuckling over his sly and delightful naughtiness.

City Lights was to have its Riviera premiere at Monte Carlo, capital of the world's smallest principality, Monaco. Charlie was asked to be the guest of Prince Louis Honoré Charles Antoine, ruler of the neat, unreal little country (395 acres). He was interested in the economic aspect of the principality whose subjects, the Monégasques, paid no taxes. The Casino supported the "nation."

An aide-de-camp trimmed in pounds of gold braid and gold buttons appeared at Charlie's hotel in the afternoon and made it known that he was expected to dine with the Sovereign of Monaco that

evening in the seven-hundred-year-old palace in which Prince Louis and his court made their home. After dinner, royalty and Charlie, augmented by the British consul, who was to conduct him to the palace, would repair to the theater and enjoy *City Lights* from the royal box.

Charlie, accompanied by the consul, arrived at the palace at seven o'clock, only to be told that several urgent matters had come up which demanded the Prince's undivided attention; hence, he could not dine with Mr. Chaplin but would join them at the theater later. Charlie, somewhat taken aback at this news, tried hard to imagine one affair of the toy kingdom which would carry half the importance of his own presence that evening.

The hostless dinner was certainly not a hilarious one. The consul was the only other guest who spoke English. But somehow they struggled through, Charlie looking, as he declared later, "sweetly idiotic" at everyone, especially the various government officials who were stiffer, more exaggeratedly formal than like representatives of larger kingdoms.

After finishing the innumerable courses of an excellent dinner, the consul was informed by a Monacan minister that they were not expected at the theater until ten o'clock. *City Lights*, he explained, would go on the screen at that time.

Charlie, who was definitely nettled over the whole proceedings by now, suggested *sotto voce* to

the consul that they do as they damn well pleased, leave early, take a walk—do anything rather than sit and wriggle on the griddle of court etiquette; but the consul, of necessity a stickler for the proprieties, squelched him and held him down. They must wait for the ruler to give word for their departure.

At long last the permission came through by telephone to the minister, and they set out for the theater. What was their surprise and Charlie's rage to find the royal family, consisting of the Prince and his daughter, already seated in the box. Amusement at the coolness of their reception broke through his ill-humor. After all the boredom and obedience of the early evening they had committed the unpardonable offense of arriving at the theater *after* royalty was seated.

The picture was got through, Charlie feeling much like a small boy who, having been scrubbed and brushed and put into a pew and told to stay there, could jolly well expect a good hiding after church, no matter how well he behaved. He could see with his mind's eye the front pages of the newspapers making a Roman holiday out of the fact that he had kept the Prince waiting.

His surmises proved correct. The papers had a story. His Highness was deeply offended. Had Charlie had a command of French, he could have enlightened him, no doubt, as to the blunders for which his own ministers were solely responsible,

but, having to depend upon the consul, he found himself at a disadvantage. So he shrugged it off as merely another instance when the public figure pays.

Emil Ludwig, noted biographer, stopped in Nice for a day on his way to America. Charlie, who had first been attracted to him by his able *Napoleon*, arranged a program for Ludwig's stay. They had a quiet lunch together at the Palm Beach Casino opposite the island of Sainte Margu rite, the reputed site of the prison made famous by *The Man in the Iron Mask*.

Ludwig, who has a genuine fondness for Charlie, was charmed by the latter's wish to monopolize him. And Charlie in turn was like a small boy let out of school to have a visit with his idol. During the luncheon, Ludwig gravely produced a bay leaf from his pocket and presented it to Charlie with solemn formality. "It was the custom of the ancient Greeks," he said, "to bestow a laurel leaf upon those whom they admired, and I want you to keep this leaf as a token of my esteem."

Discovering in each other an inordinate love of beauty, their talk grew into a discussion of the beauty of motion each had found in simple, natural acts of people. Charlie held out for Helen Wills Moody's tennis playing, or a man plowing a field in Flanders after its devastation by the War. He pantomimed for Ludwig, the stoop of the man's back, his determination and dauntless courage

in setting out to wrest life once more from the war-torn land.

Ludwig countered with something he had seen in Florida; the red glow of the sinking sun, a motorcar rolling slowly along the beach with a girl in a bathing suit lying on the running board lightly trailing one toe over the smooth surface of the sand.

They spoke of children. Ludwig confessed himself intensely personal in his love for his son; Charlie gazed at him wistfully with the envy of the lonely soul wanting terribly to feel these things but somehow doomed to failure.

"I have a great deal to live up to," Ludwig declared. "The little chap has heard that his father writes books and, loving books, he looks up to me as to God."

Charlie, as always when the subject of home-keeping happiness and its joys came up, tried to consider impersonally his own path of aloneness. Whether he liked it or not, he had to pursue his own way, sometimes wondering fearfully whether, by walking alone, he had missed the true meaning of life. Eventually his subconscious mind reassured him. He was free of all fetters. His eyes were opened to the great comedy with its underlying tragedy of the human race.

Ludwig evinced interest in the books Charlie read and liked. "The self-educated man is far more interesting than the product of schools and

tutors and colleges," he told him. Charlie was gratified at this opinion. He admitted he read slowly, therefore had not covered as much ground as he could have wished. But, wasting none of his time on trash, he had encompassed the Bible, a great deal of Shakespeare, biography, and history, as well as the philosophers, Emerson, Nietzsche, and Schopenhauer.

They fell upon the subject of Christ in literature. Charlie was emphatic in his appreciation of Sadakichi Hartmann's *Last Thirty Days of Christ*. This play (never produced on Broadway) embodies a rare and, to the strictly orthodox, sacrilegious vein of satire. It portrays Jesus as the mystic, the lone philosopher in an age of materialism, eons ahead of his own disciples, an "old soul" far above the understanding of his closest followers. But it shows him as a cynic, also, divining the sycophancy of his disciples.

Hartmann, one of the few geniuses, in the narrower sense of the term, of our day, has by the iconoclastic trend of his writing confined himself to a comparatively small audience of readers. The commonplace mind is so outraged by his themes that it overlooks the subtle poetry of those themes and his exquisite handling of words. Like the masters of old, Sadakichi goes his way, seeking patronage from the rich, his inferiors. That this patronage is more often denied than given is incontrovertible in a world in which prize fighting and

football games are more vital to the life of the community than the saga of an intellectual and spiritual giant working, unobtrusively, for immortal perfection.

The time came to proceed on their travels, to Algiers and Morocco. Charlie, May Reeves, Robinson, and Kono, accompanied by Boris Evelinoff, Frank Gould's personal representative everywhere and foreign correspondent for the Paris *Soir*, set out.

While in Morocco, Charlie received a wire from Maisie urging him to come to Venice for a large party she was to give. Charlie smiled at the correctness of his surmises about Maisie. And though he held the friendliest feeling for her, he was glad that he had escaped an evening in Venice to be done, no doubt, in the Hollywood manner. He had Kono wire their regrets.

Again Charlie grew irritable, plagued by somber thoughts on the futility of running about Europe in such prescribed fashion. If one could go absolutely alone, he complained—but this being on show was stupid and utterly futile.

May, who was merely a guest of the party, understood this need to be alone. She suggested her going back to Paris to await them there. Kono suggested that Charlie come to some decision about Carl Robinson, whom he actively disliked by now. Charlie fell in with both suggestions and as May

left for Paris, Robinson was sent back to Hollywood, where his connection with the Chaplin studio was permanently severed.

Returning to the south of France after a cursory view of Algiers and Morocco, Charlie continued to be irritated by the penalties of his fame. With H. G. Wells he visited Grasse, the sleepy, lovely old town with twelfth-century atmosphere high above the Mediterranean. They were on their way to the cathedral when, climbing the narrow streets, Charlie's garter broke. They turned back toward a shop where he might get a new pair, Wells for a time extolling the wonders of Grasse, all unmindful of the crowd trailing them at a discreet distance. Finally Charlie turned and laughed through his annoyance. "Look!" he directed Wells's attention, "How would *you* like to be the Pied Piper of Hamelin?" Wells was visibly alarmed. "I think you'd better go on alone," he suggested hastily. "I'll meet you at the car, later." "Oh, no, you don't," Charlie returned emphatically. "You'll see it through, get a taste of the whole damned, insane business."

They took refuge in a shop too small to admit the crowd, which, instead of dispersing, grew larger by the moment, and when Charlie and Wells dodged out a back door into the alley, the mob dodged also and, quickly catching up, marched solemnly along behind them.

To visit the cathedral was now impossible. "You'll have to postpone it until you've grown a

beard," Wells said. They reached their car and escaped.

Charlie's irritation grew. At first, though inconvenienced by this untoward attention, he had looked beyond his comfort and had been touched by the reaction of the masses to his presence in the flesh, but now his worn nerves made him impatient with all of its manifestations. He decided that a celebrity rarely, if ever, gets a normal reaction from even the individual he meets. People are interested—or bored—beforehand at the necessity of doing homage. They assume, as the case may be, a fawning or a defensive attitude.

Charlie and Kono moved on to Marseilles. There they were quartered in the royal suite of the Hôtel Noailles, the rooms often occupied by the King of Spain on his visits to the French seaport. Charlie went for long walks alone, trying to recapture the savor of his holiday.

One day Kono, alone in their rooms, received a visit from Aimee Semple McPherson, the red-haired stormy petrel of Angelus Temple in Los Angeles. She had stopped over in Marseilles on the first leg of a round-the-world jaunt, objective the Holy Land, with her daughter Roberta. She had always wished to meet Mr. Chaplin, she told the amazed Kono, and now was the appointed time. Kono, although he had long since learned to expect the unexpected, tried to discourage her painlessly, but when Aimee, a strong-minded person who was



May Reeves.



Charlie, May Reeves, and Emil Ludwig on the Riviera.

used to accomplish her desires, refused to be discouraged, Kono invited her to stay for tea. Perhaps, he assured her, Charlie would come in. One never knew.

Over their tea she told Kono of her dissatisfaction with her daughter Roberta's recent marriage to the young assistant purser of the ship that had brought them to the continent. Kono then inferred that she was lonely, the honeymooners leaving her much to herself, no doubt, or at the worst, that she wanted merely a firsthand glimpse of a star away from the prejudices of her followers who consider the theater and all of its appurtenances the work of a very special devil, working overtime.

As the visit wore on and still Charlie did not put in an appearance, Kono admits that he was able to feel Aimee McPherson's especial magnetism without which no evangelist is apt to succeed. Hers is a radiant, vibrant charm which projects itself into the very air about her. Kono's curiosity as to how Charlie would receive her was at the boiling point by this time.

At last Charlie came in. He stopped short at sight of his visitor, gulped and recovered himself, determined to make his manner warm if his feet were cold. He was secretly convulsed that the charming devil-pelter who had "got a white nightie and started a new religion"* had got her own con-

* This must be credited to John Colton, playwright of *Rain* and *Shanghai Gesture*. Colton attempted a play based on Aimee's life but made the mistake of trying to work with her. Their ideas did not jell when combined.

sent to come within range of his deviltry. He tried to fathom her reasons for looking him up. Surely she must know that he rejected fundamentalism in religion and, he reflected, she must know also that he, and all artists, stood for original sin according to the tenets of the Four-Square gospel. He prevailed upon her to dine with them, and Aimee was nothing loath.

Throughout the dinner Charlie twitted her good-humoredly about the mental age of her audiences (she inquired if he was aware of the mental age of a motion-picture audience), her success as an evangelist, and declared that she would have made a great actress.

Aimee did not seem offended, let him have his say.

"I've been to your Temple to hear you," he told her, "and half your success is due to your magnetic appeal, half due to the props and lights. Oh, yes, whether you like it or not, you're an actress."

Aimee McPherson smiled.

"Now, theater in all its forms is anathema to your audiences," Charlie continued, thoroughly enjoying himself, "so you give to your drama-starved people (for all of us must have drama) who absent themselves through fear, a theater which they can reconcile with their narrow beliefs, don't you?"

Aimee smiled warily.

"Religion—orthodox religion," he went on, "is based on fear, fear of doing something on earth

which will keep them out of heaven. My God, they miss out on all the glorious freedom of life in order to reach a mythical heaven where they can walk on golden streets and play a harp—a bait of pure boredom, if you ask me.”

Aimee had not asked him, and she looked a little shocked.

“Our worlds are different,” she said, “vastly different.”

This mannerly riposte drew no blood. Charlie retired from the one-sided duel.

Next evening Charlie announced that he was escorting Aimee to the colorful, picturesque water front of Marseilles.

He came back from their excursion gay, his mood of irritation with the world gone. Next evening they set out for a long walk about the city proper. And so it went until time for Aimee’s sailing. The incongruous interlude ended. The evangelist proceeded on her pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Edward, Prince of Wales

SPRING was approaching. Charlie wanted to go to Juan-les-Pins, the gay seaside resort which was ultra vogue that year. He had Kono wire May Reeves to meet them there.

May joined them and proved herself a wholesome, jolly companion. Proficient in water sports and blessed with a sunny nature and a capacity for simple pleasures, she whipped Charlie's flagging spirits to a matching gaiety.

No illness had marred their journeyings so far, but suddenly some fish eaten at the hotel brought Kono low with ptomaine poisoning. Charlie, who is never ill and who attributes his good health to his brisk, long walks, was terrified. He was helpless in the practical exigencies of everyday living. He was sure Kono was going to die.

May, realizing his nervous apprehensions, promptly put him out of Kono's room and took charge of the nursing. She missed Charlie for a time, and when three doctors, besides the hotel physician and two nurses, showed up, she understood his absence. Charlie was a believer in the

strength of numbers. He had corralled all the available doctors and nurses in the village. It was just as well, for May had two patients on her hands instead of one. Charlie became actually ill but he firmly refused to go to bed until Kono was out of danger.

"Follow him around," May instructed one of the nurses. "Give him sedatives as often as you can. And keep him out of here." She referred to Kono's room, where she had taken up a constant vigil.

On the third day the real patient was out of danger, but convalescence was slow. Charlie decided that Kono must stay in Juan-les-Pins until the effects of the poisoning were completely worked out.

Count Harry d'Arrast came from Paris and persuaded Charlie to motor back to Paris with him, leaving Kono and May to follow later by train. After another week, they took the train for Paris, May and Kono and the Siamese cat.

Two of these valuable and eccentric cats with their mink-colored coats and light blue eyes had been given to May by an admirer in Paris. One had met an untimely death while May's attention was taken up with nursing Kono. Siamese cats are great jumpers, it seems, and they are not mindful of the old adage to look before one leaps; they leap first, and occasionally do not live to look. Kitty I had taken a flying leap through an open window of

the sickroom to the ground seven floors below. May was saddened by its untimely demise and cherished the other, keeping it by her side on the journey back to Paris.

Count d'Arrast urged Charlie to go next to Biarritz, the seaside playground near the French border in Spain. The four of them, May, Charlie, d'Arrast, and Kitty II motored there, leaving Kono to follow with the luggage by train.

Winston Churchill was vacationing in Biarritz. He invited Charlie to lunch. The next day Harry bore Charlie off for an overnight visit with the former's mother, who lived at the family seat, fifty miles away.

Kono, left alone with May, took her to the Café de Paris for luncheon and over the table she discussed frankly her feeling for Charlie. She had fallen deeply in love with him and while she was modest about her qualifications as a wife, she was older in background, more agreed upon what was—and was not—important than the other young women to whom Charlie had given his interest. Kono told her that he would be pleased to see them married, but he warned her of Charlie's recurrent desire to escape.

On the evening of Charlie's return to Biarritz, Kono, dining with friends at the Club Casanova, recognized the Prince of Wales at a near-by table with, as his friends pointed out, Lord and Lady Auckland (who had a home in the Basses-Pyré-

nées) and Thelma Morgan Converse, Lady Furness, sister to Gloria Morgan Vanderbilt.

Kono hurried back to their hotel to tell Charlie the news, glad, he says, to escape the cloying attentions of the wife of a certain noted wine maker of France, who thought he was "cute."

Charlie was delighted. Edward, England's charming Wales, was the one person he really wished to know—as who did not? He felt that in his democratic Royal Highness he could come closer to the England of his romantic ideals than by any other measure. He instructed Kono to telephone Lady Furness, whom he knew, and apprise her of the fact that he was there. Lady Furness immediately, after a hurried consultation with their hosts, invited him to dinner.

Charlie was almost overcome by self-consciousness when the time actually came to enter the Aucklands' gate. But he found only Lady Furness in the drawing room and was soon put at ease by her, so that when the Prince came into the room he was able to get through his informal presentation with some degree of composure.

It was Lady Furness who, later, was to serve as the unwitting and indirect cause of King Edward's abdication. She it was who introduced him to his future wife, Wallis Warfield Simpson. Thelma Morgan had been, since they first met, one of Edward's good and understanding friends. She had regarded him as a human being, rather than

as a puppet of the traditional marionette show of royalty.

As the dinner wore on and champagne mercifully released Charlie from his self-consciousness, the Prince and Charlie progressed from "Mr. Chaplin" and "Sire" to "Charlie" and "Eddie."

A few days later Charlie gave a dinner party at the Hotel Miramar for Prince Edward. The latter's party left by plane for London shortly afterward. Charlie decided to stay on for a month.

It was while they were still in Biarritz that mail from London of a disturbing nature began to catch up with them. May Shepherd, the temporary secretary engaged by Carl Robinson when they first arrived in England, who had stayed on at the hotel in London to finish up the correspondence, was demanding more salary than she had agreed to accept. Five pounds a week, approximately twenty-five dollars, she averred, was not adequate for the onerous duties that had developed. She wanted about five times that salary. The studio, awaiting Charlie's instructions in the matter, were quite willing to pay that sum, but Charlie, always penurious in such matters, stuck to the original agreement. He would not be taken for a good thing, he declared. The sometime stubborn and always impetuous Charlie was angry.

Kono's practical nature asserted itself in agreement with the studio. He advised Charlie to allow Miss Shepherd the additional money and save him-

self annoyance. He reminded him that women, some of the best names of England had written him notes, which, while innocent in intent, might sound indiscreet if Charlie were short-sighted enough to allow the matter to come to the law courts. Charlie held out. He would go to London himself and settle the matter.

Stopping off in Paris, Kono received a letter from Wheeler Dryden:

Hotel Powers
52 Rue François I
Paris

August 14, 1931.

Dear Kono:

My fiancée, Miss Dorothy Cevaley, tells me that she has had a little chat with you in Paris and that you are looking very well. I am glad to know it and to know that you have benefited from your stay in San Juan les Pins.

I did not hear from Mr. Chaplin in reply to the letter I sent him before I left New York. The matter about which I wrote him (the advance of the remainder of my salary for this year)* is most important to me Kono, as this money will enable me to get married when Dorothy and I go to London—which we plan to do soon—so if you could call Mr. Chaplin's attention to the letter I am sending by this post, I would greatly appreciate it.

I spoke with Mr. Sidney on the long distance telephone about a week ago and he was rather anxious about an important letter he had written Mr. Charlie; it concerned a law suit some one has instigated.† Did he receive this letter? If not, please ask the hotel in Versailles to send it on to you.

Best wishes to you, Kono, from

WHEELER DRYDEN

* Twenty-five dollars a week.

† The May Shepherd suit.

Two months later, after Kono had made desultory efforts to have Charlie take notice of his half-brother's request, Dryden wrote again with less formality and more urgent tone:

Hotel Curzon
Mayfair
London

October 14, 1931.

Dear Kono,

How are you these days? Hope that styne has disappeared from your eye!

Have waited to hear from you with news about a definite appointment for Dorothy and me to see Charlie. Surely he is not so rushed for time, now, is he? Can't you contrive to mention me to him, again—making sure to tell him I *don't* want to bother him about financial matters. Just a quiet little visit. Please try to fix it, Kono.

Sincerely,

WHEELER

Indicating that Charlie's attitude about money is an unconscious one and inconsistent, two incidents of variant moods are pertinent and may be told here.

On one of his rare inspections of his kitchen, in his home in Summit Drive, Beverly Hills, he complained bitterly to Kono of the "extravagant" stock of cold meats in the refrigerator. Kono, wishing to keep contented the excellent staff of servants he had recruited—the chef, butler, valet, and chauffeur—did not contest the point but quietly bought another ice box, which he had installed on the service porch. The meats were kept in this.

Thus a bill of thin fare rewarded Charlie's next preview of the culinary department.

In contrast to this, Charlie had been troubled many nights by insomnia (during the filming of *City Lights*). Finally after a ten-mile walk, late at night, he tumbled into bed and enjoyed ten hours of refreshing sleep. At the studio next morning Alf Reeves met him with the news that he had dropped eighty thousand dollars the day before in the market. Charlie waved a negligent hand. "What's eighty thousand dollars?" he shouted loftily. "I have slept!"

Back in London, Charlie fancied he detected a lack of cordiality from official England, due he believed to his having run away from Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. And then, he had unwittingly ignored a sort of unofficial command to appear at a benefit vaudeville performance at which Their Majesties, King George and Queen Mary, would be present. Unused to attending to these communications himself, he had, while Kono was sick in San Juan les Pins, given it a cursory examination and tossed it into the waste basket. When the furor aroused over his supposed churlishness in refusing to give his services to such a cause, and his discourtesy to Their Majesties, reached him through the press, it was too late to do anything about it except delegate Sir Philip to explain it, which he did.

Sir Philip Sassoon declared that England's ap-

parent lack of official recognition of him upon his return was a desire to allow him to mingle freely and unattended by publicity with the group of people who fostered all that was new and gay and smart in London, in other words a freedom of action which is dear to every Englishman's heart. This seems the most plausible explanation of the three.

Having met the Prince of Wales, who was unprincipally only in that he was courageous enough to turn his back on the dull and prosaic and seek his companions among the moderns, Charlie was not at a loss for entertainment. Lady Cholmondeley, Sassoon's sister, introduced him to the interesting set later to be frowned upon and condemned by the Archbishop of Canterbury for their lack of conformity to outmoded standards. Lady Cunard, widow of Sir Bache Cunard, Lady Oxford (Margot Asquith), and Sybil, Lady Colfax—all three renowned London hostesses—were happy to entertain for Charlie. In their homes he met the intelligentsia, successors to the "Bright Young Things" of the immediate postwar period.

Meanwhile the officers of British United Artists Corporation, Ltd., were growing more perturbed over the urgency of May Shepherd's demands. Arthur Kelly, president of the company (the Sonny of Charlie's youth, and Hetty's brother), and Mr. Murray Silverstone, managing director, asked Kono to use his powers of persuasion with

Charlie to settle the affair. But Kono assured them that Charlie had gone temperamental and that it was useless. They explained to Kono that their positions as employees of United Artists engendered a certain diffidence in importuning their most important star and one of the owners of the company to behave.

"Hooey," was Kono's cynical comment on this to himself. "I get the dirty work, as usual."

He returned to the hotel to find a letter from Miss Shepherd in which she recounted her indignities, complaining that Charlie ignored her demands and that when she had seen Mr. Silverstone he had referred her to Carl Robinson, who in turn had referred her to Charlie or Mr. Silverstone. She was going to sue. She characterized the whole situation as ridiculous and added that she honestly thought he did not understand her position.

She, on the other hand, could not understand Charlie's reluctance to part with small sums which could not in any way affect his well-being. It is one of the enigmas of his complex nature, induced by his early privations.

Kono urged Charlie to settle. Charlie's reply was to engage Guedalla, Jacobson and Spyer, a firm of solicitors in Old Broad Street, to fight the case! He signed a retainer on October 23 after repeated reminders by the firm, through Kono.

Meanwhile, Charlie had accepted an invitation from Winston Churchill for a week end at his

home, Chartwell Manor, in Wilshire-Kent. Arriving on Friday, he was restless and nervous. He retired behind a wall of silence which Kono had come to recognize as the incubation of a story idea for his next picture. He forgot the impending suit against him, nor was he at pains to conceal his impatience to get back to town and be alone, but Churchill, a man of great tolerance and understanding, was consistently gracious and accepted Charlie's mood for what it was—the vagaries of the creative mind.

When they were once more in London, Charlie told Kono that May Reeves's presence annoyed him, demanded that he send her away, at once, to Paris. She could wait for him there. May understood this turn of events and amiably agreed to go.

Tired by now of the small furor over the May Shepherd suit, Charlie instructed his solicitors to settle in full without further ado. He had had his little hour of childlike protest against a world which was trying to take from him a toy, an insignificant toy, to be sure, but *his*.

Switzerland

TIRING OF LONDON, Charlie hit upon the idea of going to Switzerland, in spite of Kono's reminder that he did not care for mountains. Upon occasions, it is Charlie's wont to blame this aversion to mountains upon the purely hypothetical Romany strain in his blood. Douglas Fairbanks was in St.-Moritz, and letters from him had been urging Charlie to come on for winter sports.

It was December 12 when Charlie, Lady Cholmondeley, and Kono arrived in the winter playground of the Swiss Alps. Charlie confided in Lady Cholmondeley his feeling for May Reeves, told her he had dismissed her summarily from London, and wanted to make amends. She insisted that he send for the girl at once to join them there. Syd Chaplin came on from Nice.

May, by this time, was hopelessly in love with Charlie. Every word of his was, to her, important; his moods were to be, above any inconvenience of hers, respected.

It was evident to any interested onlooker now that she would make him an admirable wife. Her

youth and buoyant spirits, yet lack of frivolity; her poise and good breeding, gay charm and dark beauty, her understanding of the tortuous paths of his thoughts, all fitted her more to be his wife than any of the women who had preceded her. Yet Charlie gave no sign of offering marriage to her. Lady Cholmondeley, who genuinely liked May, did what she could to point his thoughts in that direction. To no avail.

Charlie had, in the first heat of his infatuation, promised May everything from a kimono from Japan, their next destination, to a screen career in Hollywood, but it was apparent that to May none of these things weighed importantly beyond the simple fact that through the weeks of their association she had grown to care deeply for him.

Charlie's actual reasons for failing to ask May to be his wife are not known, for he sank into an aloof silence when approached on the subject. And presumably he did not offer her a screen career because, first, he was not making a picture and, second, he sensed her superiority to the raw plastic material from which he was wont to fashion his creations. And it is true that he had begun to tire of May for no reason at all, save that the quality of his affection is ever fragile and its duration preterient.

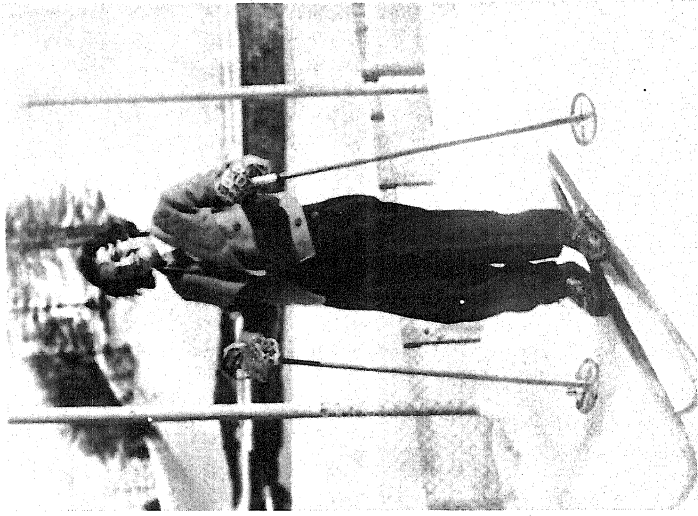
Douglas Fairbanks had gone; Lady Cholmondeley, puzzled over Charlie's sudden change of



Charlie, May Reeves, and Siamese Kitty II, in San Juan les Pins.



Charlie in the aesthetic dance of the
tissue, St.-Moritz, 1932.



May Reeves at St.-Moritz.

spirits and withdrawal from their sports, had returned to London. Syd Chaplin had left for Nice.

Before he went, however, Syd had urged Kono to arrange for him to accompany them to the Orient. Kono did suggest it to Charlie, who, after a few days' hesitation, finally consented to take him along. Syd was informed by telegraph at Nice that he was to join them at Naples. They, Charlie, May, and Kono, left for Italy.

From Milan they pushed on to Rome, where at Charlie's half-hearted request an attempt was made by United Artists representatives to have him meet Mussolini. Il Duce, it chanced, had no free hours of appointment until the following week. The idea was discarded. They entrained for Naples, where they were to sail within a few days, on March 5, on the S.S. *Suwa Maru* for the Far East.

To May, who understood Charlie's moods and his fear of realities, the approaching separation was a tragedy. She knew that she would never see him again. She yearned over his lovable qualities; over the lack of understanding of his true nature by those closest to him, Syd and Kono; over his helplessness to defend for himself, most of all over his aloneness.

She stood on the Naples dock, a pathetic figure, smiling valiantly as their boat drew out into the harbor. She was sad because she recognized that Charlie was bound down and held captive by his

necessity to serve, at whatever cost to himself and to those who love him, the bitter, quenchless flame in his heart; that neither she nor anyone could fill, for any length of time, his hunger.

Her prescience was right. Once she had disappeared from view into the murky gloom of the pier, May had ceased to be a living, breathing personality to Charlie. She became an incident, and an unimportant one, along his dark and troubled way.

Japan

IT IS NECESSARY to retrogress into the year preceding this European tour to understand the reasons Charlie had for wanting to visit Japan. He had met many prominent figures from that country, among them, Prince Tokigawa, Head of the House of Peers; Debuchi, Ambassador to Washington; Prince Nakagawa, President of the Japanese Peace Society; Japanese admirals, generals, and motion-picture stars. But not until he had seen the Japanese *Kengeki* (analagous to our Shakespearean tragedies) performed in Los Angeles had he evinced any interest in visiting his secretary's native land.

In 1929, the Association of Japanese Theater Promotion had produced their famous *Kengeki* in a makeshift theater in downtown Los Angeles. The plays, stately and heroic portrayals of the classic legends of old Japan, involve the historical two-bladed sword fights and are part of the esthetic education of every Japanese with any claim to culture.

Through Kono, Charlie had been invited to at-

tend the *Kengeki*. Doctor Cecil Reynolds, Harry Crocker, Count Harry d'Arrast, and Georgia Hale were included in the invitation.

Charlie was enthralled by the enactment of the tragedies. After the performance he wished to go backstage and meet the actors. Kono demurred. He explained that the producers might be met but never the actors. It is hard for the Occidental to understand that actors, in Japan, are a caste apart. The Japanese middle or upper class attends his theater, admires their performances while he holds the performers in supreme contempt. There is an expression, "Kawara no Kojiki," "beggars of the river bed," applied to actors in Japan, today.

Charlie insisted, and Kono, to appease him and at the same time save face with his Japanese associates, managed a quick, furtive meeting with the cast and hurried Charlie on to meet, more openly, the men responsible for bringing the plays to America.

Charlie was warm in his praise to the producers and, upon an impulse of enthusiasm, declared he would arrange for a Hollywood showing of the tragedies. The motion-picture people must have an opportunity to see these heroic, and at the same time fragile, tracteries of the idealism of a splendid bygone age.

Weeks went by, and Charlie (engrossed in the production of *City Lights*) gave no further sign that he remembered the existence of the *Kengeki*.

Kono jogged his memory at several times, but Charlie had retreated into one of his somber withdrawals from all realities. And Kono, eventually recognizing the futility of pressing the matter, was angered by Charlie's indifference to "losing face" and more perturbed by its causing Kono himself to lose with his fellow countrymen, a generous measure of the same commodity.

Kono had little grasp of the prerogatives of genius which takes where it may and gives when it pleases. He did not know that genius consists, in part, of the instinctive absorption, in fleeting contact, of all that is great, making it greater still. He expected a practical, tangible return for what Charlie had, with the inalienable privilege of genius, appropriated to himself.

Kono went in agitation to Sid Grauman, the outstanding impresario of motion-picture premieres and their elaborate prologues at the time. He knew Grauman, as the latter was a friend and admirer of Charlie's. He told him of his predicament. And Grauman, essentially a showman, brushing aside the threatened minus-countenance of both Charlie and Kono, grasped the essence of the matter. He even waived the memory of an indignity he had recently suffered at Charlie's impish hand.

This was a casualty at which all Hollywood had been chuckling. One of Charlie's personal vagaries has always been strict avoidance of a barber's

chair. Perhaps this aversion is rooted in his early, hateful experience as a lather boy in the Kennington shop.* It may be partly due, also, to his leaning toward small economies and further supported by his belief that he can cut his own hair better than any barber can do it. Whatever the reason, he has a barber's chair in his dressing room, and while he snips and cuts, turning this way and that before a large mirror, he is wont to entertain his more intimate male friends.

Sid Grauman, whose long, bushy locks have been for years the target for many good-natured gibes from friends and columnists, appeared on the scene one day as Charlie was engaged in feather-edging his own neckline. In the mirror, Charlie spied Sid's long bob. He talked fast to allay any suspicion of the foul intent in his mind, completing his work. Then, jumping down from the chair, he pounced upon the unwary Sid, urging him to let him "trim some of those uneven ends *a little*." Sid climbed into the chair, cautioning Charlie to "go easy." Charlie snatched up the electric clippers and, before Sid could stay his hand, buzzed a neatly mowed path through the forest of Sid's Fiji-Islanderish locks. Then whirling the chair so Sid could glimpse the havoc, and the picture of penitence, he explained that the clippers had "slipped." So there was nothing to do but cut the whole head to match. Sid took one despairing look

* Page 40.

and slumped speechless deeper into the chair, cursing himself silently for a trusting fool.

When the slaughter was complete, Charlie drew back with a flourish. "Now," he exclaimed, "you *look* like something!" But he did not specify what.

Sid refused to look at the utter ruin to his prized locks. He gazed sadly at Charlie, ruminating upon the perfidy of friends. And then he climbed out of the chair and stalked out of the house without so much as a backward glance at the copious mattress stuffing lying on the floor.

For months Sid had avoided Charlie while he grew a new crop of hair, passed him by quickly and without speaking when they met; but when Kono submitted the possibility of producing the *Kengeki*, he was all showman, his grudge forgotten. If Charlie said they were worth while they must be good. He decided upon a midnight matinee in the Chinese Theatre in Hollywood Boulevard, of which he was owner.

Meanwhile the troupe had moved on to San Francisco. Kono notified the local manager of Grauman's plan, and the company was recalled to Los Angeles, all dates in the north canceled.

Sid Grauman sent out invitations to the more important members of the picture colony. Sam Goldwyn, Joseph Schenck, Cecil B. DeMille, were among the producers. Stars, both feminine and masculine, were notified, and when the sets were moved in after the evening showing of the picture

then on the boards at the Chinese Theatre, few invitations had been disregarded. The *Kengeki* were performed by the cast as an inspired unit; they were playing, that night, they knew, to the elect.

When the last tragic death was died, there were shouts of "Marvelous!" "Bravo!" "This must be shown to every lover of good theater in Hollywood!" The chosen few had been brought together for a moment in the exaltation of perfection. Sid Grauman arranged on the spot for a presentation in the old Windsor Square Theater, now the semi-private playhouse of the Ebell Club.

Mr. Grauman's publicity director, Ed Perkins, was given the task of spreading the word, and an excellent job he made of it, too. Grauman bought fifty tickets for himself and sent them out to friends who had not seen the plays. He refused to accept any share of the profit for himself.

Fourteen hundred people filled the Windsor Square on the opening night. Charlie was there and quite as appreciative as he had been before. Los Angeles city and county officials, including the Mayor and Chief of Police, were guests of the management. Sid Grauman acted as master of ceremonies and explained the motifs, enough of their backgrounds to make the tragedies comprehensible to the audience.

L. E. Behymer, the grand old man of Los Angeles, promoter of almost every cultural treat for

Los Angeles for many years, was present and was afterwards introduced to the producers. He immediately arranged for a two weeks' run of the *Kengeki* at the Music Box Theater in Hollywood. Grauman entered into the project with Mr. Behymer and enlisted the aid of the stars in attracting attention to the Japanese plays. Each night was designated as sponsored by an established star. There was Charlie Chaplin night, Mary Pickford night, Jackie Cooper night, and so on. The two weeks were a tremendous success.

So, indirectly, because of his secretary's reluctance to lose face, Charlie became a contributor to Art in the Japanese colony of Los Angeles. A dinner was arranged by leading Japanese business and professional men to show their appreciation of Charlie's furtherance of the *Kengeki*. Three hundred guests assembled to pay their respects to him.

In the cafe in East First Street, softly lighted and lavishly decorated with synthetic cherry blossoms so real to the eye that the guests involuntarily drew in deep breaths to catch their perfume, they were served with the infinitesimal dabs of food constituting each course of a ceremonial dinner, their palates warmed by sake of the correct age and temperature. Toward the end of the courses there was champagne, and into the heady, exquisite atmosphere there came dancers recruited from various Japanese theaters.

With the sensation of disembarking from an enchanted isle, Charlie came out into the garish lights of the city and declared himself possessed of nostalgia for the unknown land, to him, of the Orient.

Charlie and Syd arrived in Japan after two months of touring Ceylon, Singapore, Java, and Bali. Kono, who had gone directly to Tokyo, returned to the port of Kobe to meet them.

The welcome at Kobe equaled in volume any which had greeted Charlie in his travels. Thousands crowded the docks and the near-by streets. From airplanes circling overhead dropped gaily decorative posters of welcome, floating down upon the heads of the cheering throngs.

The Japanese Government had extended to Charlie the freedom of all railways in the country. Charlie and Syd and Kono took train for Tokyo.

As the train had been ordered to stop for a few minutes at each station along the route, the trip was a triumphal procession equalled by nothing in the annals of Japan except the journeying abroad of their royalty. Gifts of rare sort were proffered Charlie from the officials of the towns, by geisha girls (comparable to the better type of our show girls), the most beautiful of their number having been chosen for this honor.

In Tokyo the storm of adulation reached its climax. Four hundred policemen who had been

detailed to control the crowds were barely sufficient to force a passage for Charlie through the dense jam of humanity. The procession, headed by a large motorcar containing the ministers of police, worked its way at a snail's pace through Tokyo's streets, stopping before the Emperor's palace to make brief obeisance.

Cartloads of exquisite gifts and letters poured into the Hotel Imperial, that marvel of modern achievement designed in 1916-20 by Frank Lloyd Wright, the patriarchal genius of American architecture. Japanese secretaries were employed to assist Kono.

A bodyguard of plain-clothes men was assigned to accompany Charlie whenever he ventured forth into the city. These were troublous times in Japan, politically the temper of the masses was uncertain, and alert government officials were fearful lest some unsettled mind select Charlie as the figure-head of privilege and wealth and do him some harm.

On the morning after their arrival in Tokyo, Kensuke Imugai, son of Tsuyoshi Imugai, Premier of Japan, telephoned that he was going to the Stadium to arrange for Charlie's party to witness the famous Sumo wrestling matches that afternoon.

After lunch they drove to the Stadium, where a tremendous ovation greeted Charlie's appearance. The crowd was not aware, no more than were

members of Charlie's party, that tragedy had struck down, scarcely two hours before, its national hero, the Prime Minister. But upon emerging from the Stadium, Kono was handed a message by a breathless courier, saying that Imugai had been shot at the very time while his son was away from home arranging Charlie's attendance at the wrestling matches. The message begged Kono to co-operate with the bodyguard to take every precaution of protection for Charlie. Japan wanted no situation to arise which might strain the (at that time) excellent relations between themselves and the United States.

The tragedy of the assassination of the statesman and philosopher, Imugai, struck deep at the heart of Japan. Loved and respected by his people, save by a few ruthless fanatics, he was approaching an advanced age when he might lay down the gavel of public life and retire to his books and garden.

On this last morning of his life, he was at his ease in his sitting room, surrounded by his wife and daughters. The assassins, disguised as soldiers of the guard, forced their way into the palace, killing the actual guards. They appeared in the sitting room with guns drawn. Imugai, who knew instantly the significance of their unceremonious entrance, simply rose and with quiet dignity and no outward show of fear, explained to his family that the gentlemen who had just come had some griev-

ances, imagined or true, to present to him; then he turned and, bidding the intruders follow him, walked slowly down a corridor to a room at the farthest end of the passage. Inside the room he confronted them. What, he asked, was their pleasure? Without a word they poured the contents of their guns into the unarmed, aged premier.

Had his son not gone to the Stadium in a gesture of courtesy to Charlie, without doubt he, too, would have been brutally murdered.

Charlie had been told that he was to meet the Prime Minister on the following day. Hearing the news of his death, he was unstrung, depressed that this catastrophe should have followed so closely his arrival. With characteristic volatility his imagination seized upon the assassination as an ill omen for his visit to Japan.

Kono, seeking to divert his mind from the calamity, reminded him of his pleasure, the year before, in the *Kengeki*. He assured him that he would be equally interested in performance of the *Kabuki*. Tickets were procured for the entire series, and Charlie apparently put down his impulse to rush away after only a few days in Japan.

The plays of the *Kabuki*, more modern in theme, were impressive in their native setting. The Kabuki-za Theater had a seating capacity of two thousand, and every seat was filled for each performance. The plays began at three o'clock in the afternoon and lasted until eleven in the evening.

The first play of six acts was broken after the third act by a musical posture drama or pantomime dance. All female parts were taken by men who conveyed all the delicacy of feminine gestures without the exaggerated mincing and fluttering of the Anglo-Saxon in like roles. It was as if the men impersonating women had no sex; there was the sexlessness of Ted Shawn's dancing, allowing, of course, for the variance of the Oriental from the Greek in form.

Runways, associated in our minds with revues or burlesque, extended from the front of the theater to the stage, and from these the actors made their entrances and exits while the audience loudly shouted their names instead of applauding. Shouts and cries of approval lasted for many minutes after the cast had reached the stage while the performers waited with patient calm for their cessation.

It was explained to Charlie that the Japanese take their theater seriously. Every child with any claim to cultural background is versed in the lore of the plays given year after year, yet always, to them, vividly fresh. The props are not mere papier-mâché shams to be used a few times and cast aside. The swords used in the plays are cast and tempered by swordmakers who from father to son for generations have produced the weapons of warfare and those of ceremonials. Charlie was intensely interested in the evolution of the *Kabuki*, and even more interested in the audience reaction to the

plays which they, probably, could have chanted as prompters, had any actor "gone up" in his lines.

Charlie expressed a desire to witness the tea ceremony, training for which is part of the education of every gently born Japanese girl. He was taken to the school in Tokyo, presided over by a woman gracious and charming, Madame Horikoshi, who supports the school from her own funds.

Charlie sat in awed fascination before the meaningful simplicity of the tea ceremony. He told Kono that it revealed to him as nothing else could, the character, perhaps the soul, of Japan—Japan as it was before it became tinged with Western customs.

We who hastily rinse a teapot with hot water, dump in a spoonful of tea, and pour freshly boiling water over it, might well be awed by the meticulous, almost ritual, care attending each successive movement of the preparation of tea by a Japanese lady; by the poise of the waiting guest, his silence to aid in creating tranquility of mind; and by their appreciation of the beauty of human hands in gesture.

One watches in quiet until a series of poetry of motion converts the green tea into liquid jade for the refreshment of the body after the refreshment of the spirit.

The writer, who has been privileged to watch pale hands like lilies deftly brewing tea for troubled men of affairs who gazed in calm joy at this simple act, has ventured the belief that the variant atti-

tudes toward this ceremony can be taken as indicative of the wide misunderstanding between East and West. Though artists of both hemispheres may come together in regarding beauty not as something merely purchased with great wealth but, "white hyacinths" plucked from the simple, commonplace acts of daily living, the Nordic is generally intolerant of such meticulous obeisance to the art of living.

Charlie wanted all of Japan to be consistent with the tea ceremony; he resented their inconsistencies, the intrusion of Western customs and dress. He was always annoyed by the materialism of Kono, even while he found it helpful in his practical life.

He spent hours before the pictures of the ancient masters of the color print, Hokusai, Utamaro, Harunobu, and Hiroshige, to mention a few of the better known to Occidental art lovers. By reading monographs, he was able to see that perhaps the greatest of them had been passed over by collectors, or was it that the Japanese millionaires created by war contracts and munition orders had been able to keep these precious originals in their native land? At any rate, there were the original prints of Kori-usai and Hishigawa, Moronobu and the collection of Shigekichi Mihara, for Charlie's delectation. For days, Kono, whose tastes still ran to teahouses and geisha girls, was bored by Charlie's prolix vehemence on the subject of Japanese color prints.

Charlie passed, with a cursory glance, the hy-



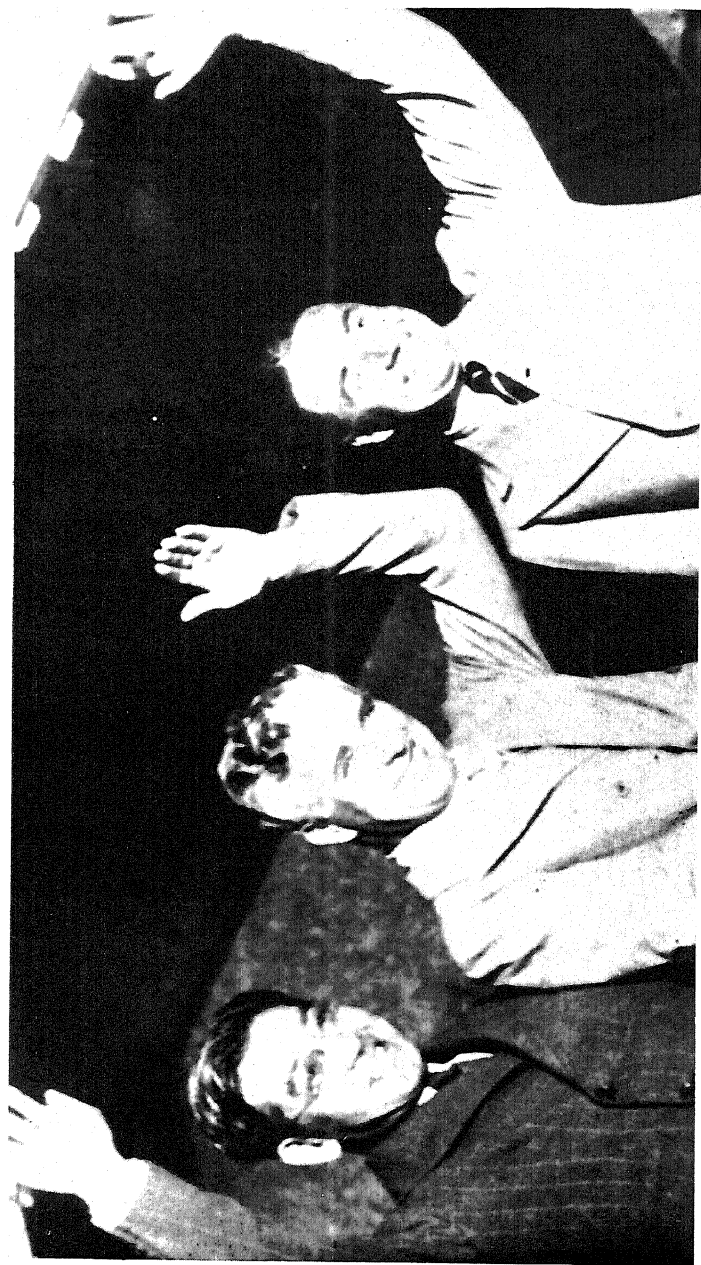
Party given for Charlie by Japanese businessmen of Los Angeles. Charlie in center, behind fan.



Kono, Charlie, geisha girl, and Syd Chaplin, Kobe, Japan.



Kono and Charlie dining in Japanese restaurant in Tokyo. Between them can be seen young Kensuke Imugai, son of the premier who had been struck down by political assassins a few days before.



Kono, Charlie, and Sydney Chaplin wave farewell from the train at Tokyo (1932).

brid works of modern art which he condemned as being neither Japanese nor European.

After a party given by Mr. Otani, president of the Shockiku Cinema, at his house, Charlie withdrew from his companions, into his room and refused to listen to Kono's reminder that he had intended making a comprehensive tour of Japan. Kono began preparations for their return home.

Syd Chaplin had been annoying Charlie with an unwarranted solicitation as to money spent on their travels. The money was Charlie's, but Syd disapproved of Kono's disposition of it. The brothers separated, Syd to return to Nice, Charlie and Kono to sail for Seattle on the *Hikawa Maru*. They had been away from Hollywood for a year and a half. Charlie was mulling over in his mind the situations for his next picture. He was eager to get home and get to work.

On the boat he went into seclusion in his state-room and day after day filled many pages with notes for *Modern Times*.

As they approached Seattle, Charlie asked Kono to wireless ahead for reservations on the first fast train to California. He received the reply that the train left at four in the afternoon of the morning the *Hikawa Maru* docked. A drawing room would be held for them. Kono dared relax. But of one thing he was quite sure. If a shouting, milling crowd met the boat in Seattle, he would emit a series of yells that would put to shame the famed

cry of the chamois in the throes of love. As a precaution against being locked up in the local bastille for screaming he had sent a wireless to the *Hikawa Maru* offices in Seattle, begging them to withhold news of Charlie's coming, and they had obligingly complied.

As the boat slowed to a stop and eased up to the pier, Kono rushed in to see that Charlie was ready for the immigration officials, who would board her and inspect all passports. He found Charlie in his cabin, gazing dreamily out to sea. Kono suggested that they would do well to disembark as soon as possible, get their land legs in a stroll about Seattle, unheralded and unsung. Charlie, though tempted with the prospect of a walk, deigned no reply. Finally he turned. "Get me a stenographer," he ordered. "Get her here as quickly as you can."

"But, Charlie, the immigration men, your passports——"

"The hell with passports. Tell them to come in here if they want to see me."

Kono's spirits took a swan dive. He did not relish relaying such a message, even softened to a request, for he knew that immigration officers are prone, at times, to regard it as an especial favor of themselves—and God—to let anyone enter their ports. However, he recognized the stubborn set of Charlie's jaw, the cold light of defiance in his eye. He went out on deck, approached gingerly one of the officials while cursing softly an employer who

could at times act like a five-year-old tired of being good.

"Would it be possible for you to send someone into——" Kono began timorously.

The officer eyed him condescendingly. "It would not," he returned curtly. Kono thought perhaps he would soften at the mention of the magic name; most people did.

"It's Mr. Chaplin," Kono essayed, his *l*'s and *r*'s becoming more than usually entangled.

The officer went right on checking passports on the table set up as an impromptu desk on the deck. The line of first-cabin passengers filing slowly by and being released was unaware of Charlie's presence on the ship.

Kono returned to Charlie and reported the brief skirmish of words. He was afraid, he told him, that he would have to come out on deck. Charlie, without looking up from the furious scribbling in which he was now engaged, flatly refused. Kono, girding his loins and polishing his best weapon, sallied forth once more to battle. He approached the table. There was a brief lull before the second-cabin line began.

"Char-lie Chap-lin is in his room. He's not well——" He got no further. "Why didn't you say so in the first place?" The officer threw Kono an accusing glance. "Charlie Chaplin, eh?" A grin, reminiscent, no doubt, of Charlie on the screen, lighted his face. "I'll go right in." He certified

Kono's passport and disappeared with alacrity. Kono heaved a sigh of relief and departed for Seattle to get a stenographer.

At the offices of the *Hikawa Maru* he chose the homeliest girl among those offered him by the accommodating management. "She was the homeliest girl *I* ever saw," Kono avers. He dispatched her boatward, then hied himself off to visit with some old friends from his schooldays in Seattle.

At three o'clock he returned to the boat, docked fourteen miles from the railway station, dashed into the stateroom and, wading through a snow-storm of typed sheets on the floor, reminded Charlie that it was time to leave for the train. The taxi, he added, was waiting.

Charlie looked up but went on dictating. Kono listened for a moment to make sure it had nothing to do with his next picture, then gathered the papers up and stuffed them into a briefcase. They could be disposed of later.

The economic situation, it seemed, had been too much for Charlie; it had really got him down. He was writing of panaceas so radical that Kono shiveringly prayed there were no stray reporters hanging about, but he only mildly inquired if someone were waiting for these results of inspiration. Charlie shook his head, replied with blithe insouciance that they could drop it off at the editorial office of the *Post-Intelligencer* on the way to the station. Kono made no answer, just sat down

and waited, knowing that Charlie would not move until reminded again. Finally he glanced at his watch and firmly declared that they must go now if they hoped to catch *that* train. He gathered up the rest of the papers and fairly pushed Charlie and his amanuensis off the boat and hustled them into the taxi. There was no time, he told Charlie, regretfully, to drop by the newspaper office. They could mail the article later.

Charlie did not seem to notice. They stopped long enough to transfer the stenographer from their taxi to another and, by breaking all speed laws, reached the train as it had begun to move out of the shed.

Having arranged the economic situation of the world to his satisfaction, Charlie sank into a deep brown study. Contemplation of his coming picture was crowding out his awareness even of where he was. Kono smuggled the briefcase out of the compartment and, tearing its contents into small bits—seven hours of dictation—scattered them to the winds of the Northwest from the rear platform of the last car of the train. Charlie never inquired the whereabouts of his treatise on world affairs. He forgot it completely.

Kono chuckled to himself as he remembered the half-wistful plaint of the homely stenographer, whispered to him on their dash uptown. Charlie, she imagined, had made tentative overtures to her in the cabin. Reflecting now upon her lack of pul-

chritude, he laughed aloud. Charlie had paid her a compliment. It was, no doubt, her first invitation from, if invitation it were, and loomed to her as her only opportunity for a Fate Worse than Death.

Hollywood—*Modern Times*—Paulette Goddard

AT HOME, in Beverly Hills once more, Charlie threw himself into a fever of writing. A national magazine had requested his account of his travels. He was eager to get at it, and in dictating this material fresh in his mind he crystallized its matter into a substance from which could be extracted the basic ideas for his next picture, *Modern Times*.

Charlie is no writer for publication. *A Comedian Sees the World* was an improvement, however, on his first story, which was published in book form as *My Wonderful Visit*. Kathryn Hunter, his studio secretary, wrote the former; Monta Bell, an excellent former director but an indifferent writer, penned the latter. Both wrote from his dictation but used, at their discretion, their own choice of phrases.

When the magazine story was off to the publisher, he plunged immediately into formulating the plot for *Modern Times*. He is an indefatigable worker, and with Kono ever on guard to discourage interruptions and keep all annoyances from

him, he worked like one possessed. And when he left his writing table for exercise, he walked about as one in a dream, through his grounds, through Beverly Hills, down Hollywood Boulevard, through Los Angeles, seeking always the busiest, noisiest jangle of crowded streets instead of the hills or the open country.

When he had reached the point where the nucleus for the picture had become a written reality, Joseph Schenck, then president of United Artists, suggested that he take a vacation away from his desk, come aboard his yacht for a week-end cruise. Charlie agreed. Mr. Schenck recruited two young women from the studio stock company, both of them comparatively unknown but both very pretty. One of these was Paulette Goddard; with the other this story has no concern.

Paulette Goddard was then, in 1932, slightly older than the age she lays claim to in 1939. This arrangement of age is always excusable in the theatrical world, especially when an actress has a childlike quality of feature and body as has Miss Goddard. Her age is pertinent here only in that she has shown a maturity of intelligence and, according to Charlie, has given him a companionship he has had from neither of his former wives.

Paulette was a blonde at the time Charlie met her but allowed her hair to return to its natural dark color, which pleased him.

Charlie saw in her, first, only the raw material

from which he could mold the orphan girl for *Modern Times*. He was on tiptoe for the effort to groom her for the part.

Before many weeks he was in love with her, and she appeared to be genuinely fond of him. And although no record can be found of their marriage, and both Charlie and Paulette maintain a strict silence on the subject, it can be assumed that the ceremony was performed at sea, probably on his yacht, the *Panacea*, and not recorded in the log or at the Hall of Records.

Paulette, more versed in the ways of the world than any of the other women to whom Charlie had given his love, was wiser than either Mildred or Lita Chaplin in the manner of conducting herself in her new home. She was willing to recognize Charlie's right at all times to be himself, was eager to dance or play when Charlie was in the mood for relaxation, and on the whole showed a kindness and understanding rarely accorded to the vagaries of the mode of life of her husband.

↪ In line with this determination to avoid the mistake of being a helpless guest in her own home, Paulette decided to take over the reins of its management and also the management of Charlie's personal affairs. This was soon evident to Kono, who was usually deliberate in absorbing a new idea.

Gradually, imperceptibly—to Charlie—she succeeded in taking over Kono's duties, and the latter

was at a loss to handle such an unprecedented state of affairs. Never before in the almost eighteen years of his employment with Charlie had anyone presumed to usurp any jot of *his* authority. It would be useless to complain to Charlie, Kono decided, when it first became apparent that no action of his, as Charlie's personal secretary, could stay safe in its triviality. Charlie was comfortable, and he was also at the stage where his emotions blinded him to any conscious thought upon practical matters. So Kono gave way with what grace he could, consoling himself that one day, before long, Charlie would come out of his fog and see for himself the way things were going.

This proved to be an erroneous hope on Kono's part. Charlie had, after many years, deviated from the usual pattern of his behavior; he had for the first time found a comradeship in marriage. Hence his home life was softened to an amenity which called for an adjustment of his reactions to marriage and a home.

Kono watched with amazement, and resentment, the transformation. He began to feel as necessary to Charlie's well-being as the proverbial gold tooth. He went to Charlie and bluntly accused Miss Goddard of trying to make it impossible for him to stay. Charlie scoffed at this accusation and accused Kono, in turn, of an exaggerated jealousy of his own authority. He demanded specific instances of Paulette's invasion into Kono's prov-

inces, but Kono, angered by this time and searching his wounded pride, could uncover none that would sound convincing.

After this unsatisfactory conference with Charlie, Kono put up a last-stand fight for his authority but was routed by Miss Goddard in the open as he had been in the skirmishes from ambush. He went to Charlie and announced his intention of resigning.

Charlie was thunderstruck at this bolt from what he had, in his absorption in his picture, come to believe as weeks went by, was a blue and cloudless sky. He was both hurt and angry. He accused Kono of disloyalty. He had assumed, he reminded him, that while they both lived Kono would continue to serve him as confidential secretary.

Kono himself did not recognize the underlying cause of his dissatisfaction. Paulette Chaplin was a woman. He was a Japanese with an inherent contempt for women as human beings. He could do no less than rebel.

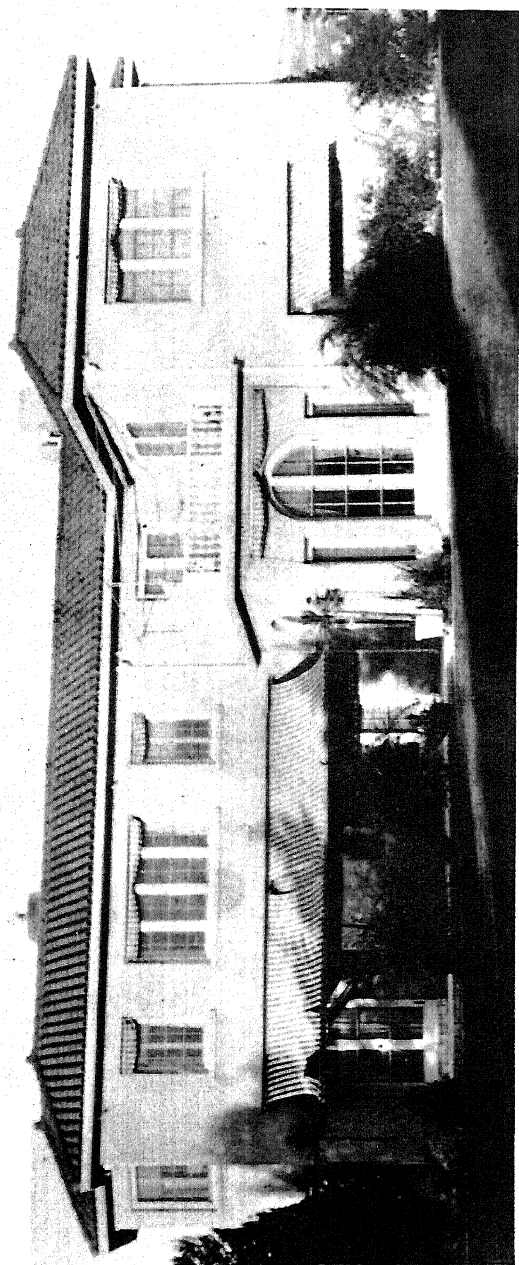
At intervals in his service to Charlie, Kono had asked for an increase in salary, but his weekly wage of one hundred dollars remained fixed, despite his plea that stars of lesser magnitude than Charlie paid their secretaries many times that amount. Charlie had assured Kono, however, as had Lloyd Wright, his attorney, that the Chaplin will named him beneficiary to one sixth of his estate, a sum of over two million dollars. The will

had been drawn with like bequests to Charlie's two sons; Syd Chaplin; Nathan Burkan (since deceased); and Alfred Reeves, studio manager who had served him long and faithfully.

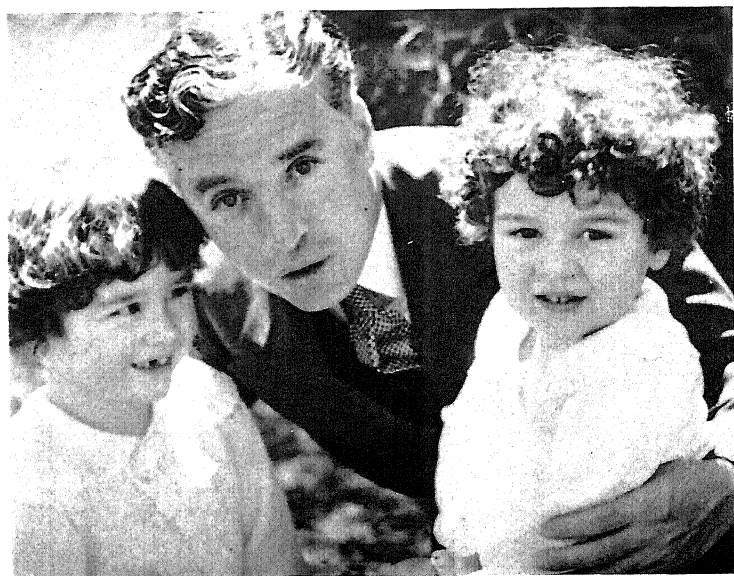
When Charlie finally became convinced that Kono would not stay and be subject to his wife's control of the helm, he suggested that he enter the employ of United Artists in Japan. He gave Kono one thousand dollars and to his wife, another thousand. Enthusiastic press agents reported the figure as eighty thousand dollars—which sounded very nice but did not happen to be true.

Charlie was upset and distraught when the time actually came for Kono to go. Kono almost relented, for he was genuinely fond of Charlie, but he had only to recollect a few of Mrs. Chaplin's onslaughts against his pride to steel himself against sympathy with Charlie's helplessness. He accepted the job in Japan at a higher salary than he had received from Charlie. His expenses to Japan were to be paid. His contract called for six months, with option to renew.

Suspicious and cynical by nature, Kono looked upon this job as a sop thrown to his disaffection, and instead of striving to make a place for himself in the office once he was in Japan, he, by his own admission, spent most of the time in the gay spots of Tokyo and in traveling through the provinces, sounding out the possibility of profit from showing Charlie's earlier films. They had never



Charlie's comfortable but unpretentious home in Summit Drive, Beverly Hills, California.



Charlie romping with his two sons on the lawn of his home, 1930.

been shown except in the larger Japanese cities.

He returned to America as soon as his contract had expired, feeling injured that it had not been renewed. He consulted with Alf Reeves on terms for the pictures, and the latter agreed to arrange an option for rights to certain pictures: *The Gold Rush*, *The Kid*, *The Pilgrim*, *Sunnyside*, *A Dog's Life*, and three others to be selected.

Again Kono went to Japan, and, after making a more careful survey of the theaters showing foreign pictures, he decided that the Chaplin interests owed it to him to reduce the price agreed upon that he might derive greater profit. He wrote Mr. Reeves to this effect and received in reply a letter in which Reeves said, "It is not a question of bargaining at all. Unless you comply with the conditions stated above, the whole thing must be called off. . . . I cannot go to Mr. Chaplin who is very busily occupied at all times, now."

It was not hard for Kono to read the handwriting on the wall. Charlie was offended that he had left him; it was useless to expect him to come to his defense. He returned to California.

Many reflections upon the instability of human relationships were Kono's in the months that followed. At loose ends, he missed the excitement incident, for nearly eighteen years, to his life with a celebrity. He began to realize that he had been spoiled by Charlie and by Charlie's friends and by others seeking patronage. He sought out some of

the high names in the picture world, to some of whom he had turned Charlie's attention when a slight recognition would help them over the current rough spot in their careers. He found most of them no longer interested in a secretary who was secretary no more. And one whom his employer refused to see. None but Joseph Schenck, formerly president of United Artists, later head of Fox-Twentieth Century, remembered his good offices. Schenck made him a loan.

Kono remembered the time, he said, when he had been offered a considerable sum to testify against Charlie for Lita Chaplin in her divorce suit, and had refused to do so. In his self-pity now he regarded himself not as the average man of honor but as a martyr who had given up the chance to become financially independent.

He recalled the approach of a publisher's agent in New York in 1932 with an offer almost equaling the sum of money per word paid Calvin Coolidge for his memoirs, for the real, inside story of Charlie Chaplin. He had refused mainly because he knew he would not only lose his job but would be cut out of Charlie's will if he did so. Besides, he could not write.* But now this loomed as unwarranted loyalty to Charlie.

Kono had saved frugally part of his salary each

* Kono's secretarial duties were unique if taken in the literal meaning of the term. It was necessary for him to dictate to a studio stenographer, all letters. She would properly phrase in English his awkwardly expressed meaning.

week, and it can be assumed that his commissions from large purchases by Charlie of cars and furniture and other commodities had netted him a goodly sum throughout the years. He had established a hat factory in Japan and had associated himself in several enterprises where his prestige as Charlie's secretary had opened the way among his countrymen.

In 1936, he learned that he had been left out of the new will drawn by Charlie. This was another bitter reminder of lost benefits.

Modern Times reached the screen in 1936, five years after its inception as an idea, four years after Charlie began to write it.

Charlie Chaplin may well toss his head and place a thumb in close proximity to his nose at all of the critics who direfully predicted his downfall in another nondialogue picture, what with the hold talkies had taken upon the public. For, according to *Variety*, a magazine not given to exaggerating benefits, his latest silent picture was the largest grossing picture of 1936, bringing in over four millions of dollars and relegating *San Francisco*, the outstanding talking picture of the year, to second in receipts.

In this picture he made the concession to sound and music made in *City Lights* with the additional advent of his own voice on the screen—in song.

According to his custom and convictions, every-

thing on the screen in each picture must have its origin in his own creation. The music for *Modern Times* was orchestrated by David Raksim from a melody essayed by Charlie in whistling. Oscar Levant in *A Smattering of Ignorance* says, "Since the whistling method of composing is a rather tenuous thing, and in any case Chaplin's whistling is at best pretty derivative, the difficulties of such a collaboration may be imagined. It was arduous enough for Raksim to sit all day waiting for Chaplin to whistle without the further complications of that artist's temperament. The inevitable thing happened but [Al] Newman [of Twentieth Century-Fox] patched up the argument and Raksim went back to taking down Chaplin's whistling."

Newman, after a terrific argument with Charlie, had walked out of the same job before. He had found "the whistling type of composer more trying by far than Stravinsky and Schoenberg together."

Against the clanging, raucous background of industrial mechanism, strikes, and riots, there runs in *Modern Times* the theme which never grows old because it was never new—the delicate tracery of the spiritual hunger of the little tramp through the antics of sardonic humor and comic pathos. Charlie loses himself in his one desire to protect and make happy the forlorn girl (Paulette Goddard) who is to him the symbol of eternal

beauty. He wears a white plume in his heart; his ridiculous appearance belies it.

Small stuff upon which to build the gamut of human experience, some of Charlie's critics declare, and yet in one scene alone there is food for conjecture, if carried into all its ramifications, as to the ultimate tragic outcome of the warring forces of the machine age against the highly organized sensibilities of the human being.

Charlie has a job in a factory, a plant prophetic of the future in which even the process of eating one's lunch is developed into mechanized feeding. He is tightening bolts on parts which are passing at a killing speed on a machine-driven belt. The deadly monotony of standing there hour after hour, his overtaut nerves geared to the speed and subjugated to the will of a merciless machine, drives him temporarily off his balance. Grabbing every lever he can find in his frenzy, he pulls them. This sets the whole tempo of the factory to an insane fury.

Charlie rescues Paulette, who is escaping from the juvenile authorities after being arrested for stealing bananas, and makes her his responsibility. He gets a job as night watchman of a large department store. He admits the shivering girl to the store, takes her to the home furnishings department, wraps her and her rags in an ermine coat he has taken from a figure, and gently puts her to sleep in a costly bed. When two fellows from the factory have robbed the store, Charlie finds him-

self in jail for the crime. He gets out, goes to work in the factory again; there is a strike. He picks up a red flag fallen from the end of an overload on a truck and waves it to call attention of the driver to his loss. He is promptly arrested for being a Communist and jailed again. (This last incident brought waves of laughter for its political significance.)

Paulette, from dancing in the street, gets a job in a cafe. She inveigles the owner into giving Charlie, who is free again, a chance to sing and dance. Charlie writes on his cuff the words to his song, then loses the cuff as the orchestra blares the opening ta-da. An incredibly funny scene ensues with Charlie dancing about, among, even under the tables frantically trying to recover his cuff—and his lyrics. Finally he is reduced to improvising, so does it in hybrid French through which enough English is traceable to catch a filament of meaning. The effect of certain worn French phrases, having no correlation of meaning, is one of excruciating comicality.

When the juvenile police take up the scent once more, the two of them, the little tramp and the young girl who is cast in this instance to look beneath his ridiculous exterior and see his worth, are seen disappearing down the road together. The essence of gallantry is no less poignant in that the hero is clad in cast-off garments, not shining armor.

Modern Times, labeled on the screen as "Humanity's Crusade for Happiness," flicks the sensibilities once more with the delicate precision of Charlie Chaplin's art. One laughs, one does not quite weep, for all unconsciously one feels that the little tramp of Chaplin's entire repertory holds some inner glory which enshrines him above the shoddy treatment he receives.

Paulette Goddard, brittle and cool-eyed for the part, draws little sympathy in the part of the little waif. But Charlie! He is the story of all humanity struggling through darkness to find the meaning of life.

Paulette Goddard Chaplin has been kind to Charlie's sons, who are thriving and growing into fine, upstanding youngsters in a Hollywood military school. They spend the week end frequently at the Chaplin home and are fond of their step-mother, who has through a genuine interest in, and liking for them, developed into a good play-fellow with them both.

Paulette has worked untiringly to better her acting ability. In *The Women* and *Cat and Canary*, both released in 1939, she showed marked improvement. Not a great natural actress, she has nurtured the talent she has and has outstripped any of the actresses who played leading lady to Charlie, when out from under his direction.

By the same token, she had to come by experience to an understanding of children. The follow-

ing incident took place before she arrived at this point.

Young Peter Millington, aged eight, brought to Hollywood by his mother, Frances Millington, story editor, was excited over his meeting with his first movie star, who happened to be Miss Goddard. Within an hour after the momentous meeting, Mrs. Millington received a telephone call from the Chaplin home asking her permission to send small Peter a gift. Peter was in a hysteria of anticipation. "Oh, Mother, *do* you think it will be an electric train? With lots of signals?" "Mother, *what* kind of presents do movie stars send little boys?" Mrs. Millington assured him she could not guess.

Charlie's chauffeur arrived. Peter barked a shin and slid on a rug to the door. His mother opened the door. The chauffeur was completely hidden behind a large and luxuriant fern!

Mrs. Millington stifled Peter's trenchant comment, "Aw, heck!" She waited several days. Perhaps some dear old lady had received an electric train or a pair of skates. But nothing further being heard from the donor, Peter was induced to write his gratitude to Miss Goddard. He wrote, "Thank you for the fern."

His mother did not consider it odd that young Peter's interest in movie stars became, from that time, less avid.

This and That

IN 1937 Charlie became involved in a suit against him for plagiarism by the French film company, *Films Sinores Todis*, for allegedly pirating the idea for *Modern Times* from their picture *A Nous la Liberté* released by them in 1931. The French company asked in their suit filed in Federal court a restraint against further showing of the picture and an accounting of all profits from it. The suit was filed in New York on April 22, 1937. But as a result of Charlie's skill in eluding their process servers, they were unable to serve the necessary papers before going to trial. The suit was dropped.

The average reader of newspapers no doubt peruses such news with the careless criticism, "All of those guys steal ideas." But in this case as, it is safe to say, in every instance that involves Chaplin's pictures, he is wrong. Charlie is unquestionably original and creative in his work, and even if he had no scruples against plagiarism, he would scorn to indulge in it because of his conviction that his own work is immeasurably better than that of his contemporaries.

It would surprise none who know him to find the shoe of plagiarism on the other pedal extremity. Charlie, like every emotional artist, is so overcome when he finally formulates a definite story idea that he cannot keep it to himself. Warning all of his studio attachés and friends not to tell a soul, he proceeds to broadcast it himself without benefit of microphone. In restaurants, at parties, he waxes loquacious about his new story. (At this stage, the picture is indeed nebulous, and from two to four years will elapse before it reaches the screen.) In the meantime certain gentlemen in the glow of good fellowship absorb some of his talk and in time come to believe that certain angles of the proposed picture have been of their own incubation. They incorporate them in films which reach the public long before Charlie's can do so.

He was in Europe when the idea for *Modern Times* struck him. It is not improbable that he discussed it with several well-intentioned but absent-minded gentlemen there. The result is, he gets sued for his own idea.

By this double injury, the writer is reminded of an incident occurring in the Hawaiian Islands not many years ago.

The son of a minister, in the Islands, a minister involved in the Robert Louis Stevenson controversy over Father Damien, returned from Paris, where against his father's wishes he had been studying painting.

Because Son would not prepare himself for the ministry, Father, well blessed with this world's goods (as are most of the descendants of the missionaries in Hawaii), would provide him with no further funds. Son needed a clean shirt. His shirts reposed at a Chinese laundry. He went to the laundry and was unsuccessful in talking the Chinese out of his money. Noting carefully the position of his bundle as it was placed back on the shelf, he departed and, coming back later when the Chinese were eating their rice in a back room, slipped behind the counter and got his shirts.

The average young man would have stopped at this, but Son had imagination. He borrowed from various friends until he had the sum of his bill, returned to the laundry, and demanded his parcel! The Chinese could not find it. He was bewildered. Son gazed at him sadly in innocent reproach. He jingled the coins in his pocket. He left. But returning shortly with a list of the "lost" shirts, he demanded—and got—payment in full.

This particular suit against Charlie is not necessarily analogous to the incident of the shirts. On the other hand, the genial Hollywood pirates who have caught Charlie mid-seas and taken over his cargo of ideas, have had the grace not to sue *him* for plagiarism, afterward.

Charlie's well-known sympathies with the cause of freedom, in any guise, precipitated an incident

during April of 1937 which embarrassed him mainly because of the propensities of certain newspapers to scream, "Red!" at the veriest hint of liberal leanings.

Errol Flynn, Irish actor, and adventurer by nature, went to Spain and into the thick of the fighting between Fascist and Loyalist forces. Flynn was quoted by the *Hollywood Reporter* while still abroad as saying he helped to raise a fund of one million, five hundred thousand dollars, to aid the Spanish Loyalist defense of the Republic. Flynn promptly issued a denial of this through Associated Press.

The same paper published in its next issue a dispatch from the film-trade daily's Barcelona correspondent, making public a cablegram of thanks from J. Carner Ribalta, Commissioner of Public Spectacles for the Catalonian government, to Charlie as follows:

After your friendly statements toward Spanish Republican cause and to the prohibition of rebel generals in the occupied territory of your films and those of our admired Clark Gable, James Cagney, Paul Muni, Bette Davis, Marlene Dietrich, Miriam Hopkins, Joan Crawford, Gary Cooper, Wallace Beery, Douglas Fairbanks, Johnny Weismuller, Buster Keaton and the Marx Brothers, I wish to express you heartiest homage [of the] Catalonian people which represent sixty percent of picture going Spain. We [are] preparing festivals to honour you all.

The metropolitan dailies besieged Charlie for amplification of his supposed statement. Charlie,

wary as always where politics is concerned, issued through Alfred Reeves, a concise reply: "I did not make any expression of any kind regarding the conflict in Spain or the participants therein."

This was enlarged upon later by a further statement through the same medium: "I did not make any expressions and I have no political affiliations or connections with any party here or anywhere else. I have no comment to make in any way. I have nothing to say about Spain and I have nothing to say about politics."

Charlie hoped to set at rest the persistent report that he had presented sixty thousand dollars to the Loyalist government in Spain.

Charlie Chaplin became fifty years of age on April 16, 1939. That year marked also his twenty-fifth year as a star in pictures, though he actually entered pictures in 1913. Telegrams, letters, and cables poured in upon him, on his natal day, from every part of the globe. To give an isolated instance, Moscow and the Russian press stressed the social significance of his art while street posters in that city advertised a lecture by a prominent orator on Chaplin, to be illustrated with excerpts from his pictures. Many American magazines featured Chaplin articles.

London and Paris honored him. Denmark placed the chair from which he had directed his latest four pictures, in its Copenhagen Museum of the

Theater. Berlin and Rome tried to forget that he had been born.

Before his birthday, Charlie had announced his next picture, a satire upon the gentlemen with insatiable lust for power in Europe, which is scheduled for release early in 1940. This picture will be his first with full sound and dialogue, but it is a safe assumption that even though Charlie talks, it will be a digression from his original medium only in point of technique; as far as its star, Charlie Chaplin himself is concerned, it will be pantomime. He will always *show* us rather than *tell* us, and if the spectator should try the experiment of stuffing his ears with cotton while watching the film's central figure, it would in no whit decrease his enjoyment of the latest Chaplin production.

It is difficult even for a poet to bring words to life; a writer of dialogue cannot hope to convey the superb imagery that Charlie Chaplin, the pantomimist, brings to each moment of mummery.

The new picture, the first since *Modern Times*, was tentatively titled *The Great Dictator** but ran afoul of a registration at the Writers' Club, a sort of gentlemen's agreement among producers upon claims of rights to titles. At the studio it is known as Production No. 6 until such time as a final title may be selected.

* A compromise was effected and the picture titled *The Dictator*.

While vacationing near Los Gatos, California, in 1938, Charlie, with copies of *Tortilla Flat* and *Of Mice and Men* under his arm, went in search of their author, John Steinbeck. At his home, Steinbeck, gracious but impersonal to the man he did not recognize, autographed the two books.

Early in 1939, Steinbeck visited Hollywood but turned a deaf ear to importunings from various studios that he sign up as a writer for films. But in a Beverly Hills cafe, one night, he was introduced to Charlie, whom he recognized as the unknown admirer who had sought his autographs. He stammered his apologies. Charlie waved it aside. He had in fact been amused at his own *incognito*. They talked far into the night, and the result of their conversation was Steinbeck's consent to work as co-author on *The Dictator*.

This picture deriding the pomposity of leaders ridden by lust for power was at first intended only as a travesty on Hitler, his dementias of anti-Semitism and his exhibitionism. But Signor Mussolini was luckless enough to attract Charlie's attention to himself by banning all Chaplin pictures along with *Popeye* and *Mickey Mouse*, in Italy. (Il Duce stated through the official press, "The Italians do not find Mr. Chaplin funny.") And Charlie promptly widened his plot to encompass the iron-jawed Italian dictator. Whether or not he will retain this characterization remains to be seen.

When he released the news of his proposed picture, anonymous threats of dire consequences to him and his studio reached his ears. His friends and his staff waited anxiously for his decision. Would they go on or would he abandon his intent to satirize Der Führer?

Quietly he dictated a box advertisement to run on the drama page of the Los Angeles *Daily News*.^{*} It was not conciliatory in tone. At the studio he lifted an expressive shoulder and said with a gamin grin, "They'd better look out. I'll sue the soandso for copying my mustache. I had it first, you know." There is something else he had "first," the right to toss pins at the balloon of pomposity of the gutter elite. It is his by inalienable privilege.

The locale of *The Dictator* is described in the script as "the thriving metropolis of Bacteria."

The story deals with two separate worlds within this metropolis, that of the dictator surrounded by the accoutrements of wealth and power and lust for conquest; and a district smacking of the ghetto in which a lowly, peace-loving people ask only to be left to their hard work and simple pleasures.

The worlds overlap when the odd likeness of a humble dweller in the ghetto† to the dictator motivates the basic action of the plot. The fun begins.

Will Charlie attempt the role of the dictator

^{*} See Foreword.

[†] Charlie plays the dual role.

as a serious dramatic part? Would his audiences accept him in that vein? One inopportune laugh can send him into a loss computed in millions. That he would not mind, but an artistic debacle! He would mind that very much indeed.

An incident at the studio makes the outlook brighter. Charlie appeared on the set in his regular tramp costume. Everyone hailed him as "Charlie." The technicians argued with him as to the efficacy of this or that trick of lighting and camera angles. In his dictator's uniform resplendent with epaulettes, medals, and sword, the change of attitude was galvanic. He issued orders in crisp dictatorial manner, his normally soft voice changed to a rasp. His staff jumped to attention, addressed him as "Mr. Chaplin."

Charlie had begun *The Dictator* before war in Europe was declared. It will have an intensified significance now that the democracies of Europe have resolved to cry a halt to tyranny.

Paulette Goddard plays a scrub girl.* Emma Dunn, Chester Conklin, Jack Oakie, Hank Mann, Henry Daniell, Maurice Moscovitch, Lucien Prival, Bernard Gorcey, Billy Gilbert, and Reginald Gardiner have name roles in the piece. His half-brother, Wheeler Dryden, is listed as assistant director.

* Charlie's fancy for himself as a hair-doer impelled him to instruct Paulette to be on the set every morning at 8:30 that he might dress her hair for the part. He discarded the efforts of Hollywood's most famous hair stylists. "They haven't any idea how a scrub girl's hair should look," he said.

Production No. 6. His sixth picture, beginning with *The Kid*, in over twenty years! What star can retreat into private life for three years, or four, or even five, and come back to the screen with the certainty of a popular reception straight from the heart?

Charlie Chaplin.

Bon Voyage

WHAT OF THE FUTURE of the King of Tragedy? When he completes his work (not for many years, it is hoped) of that perfect blend of downright Rabelaisian hell-raising and wistful pathos, where will he live?

In London? If he can be said to love any land, England is nearest his heart. Perhaps not, for a king in England, whether king by accident of birth or by achievement, must maintain the outward show of royalty in London, and Charlie is the complete unsophisticate in a sophisticated world. And not the country. That is unthinkable for him who draws no contentment from the quiet countryside, no joy from horses and dogs, from gun or rod.

But Hollywood. For as everyone who looks into the heart of the most heartless and, at the same time, the most sentimental legendary city of the world, must know, Hollywood is the city of paradoxes. And where on this earth could the greatest paradox of them all, the King of Comedy and Tragedy, be more at home?

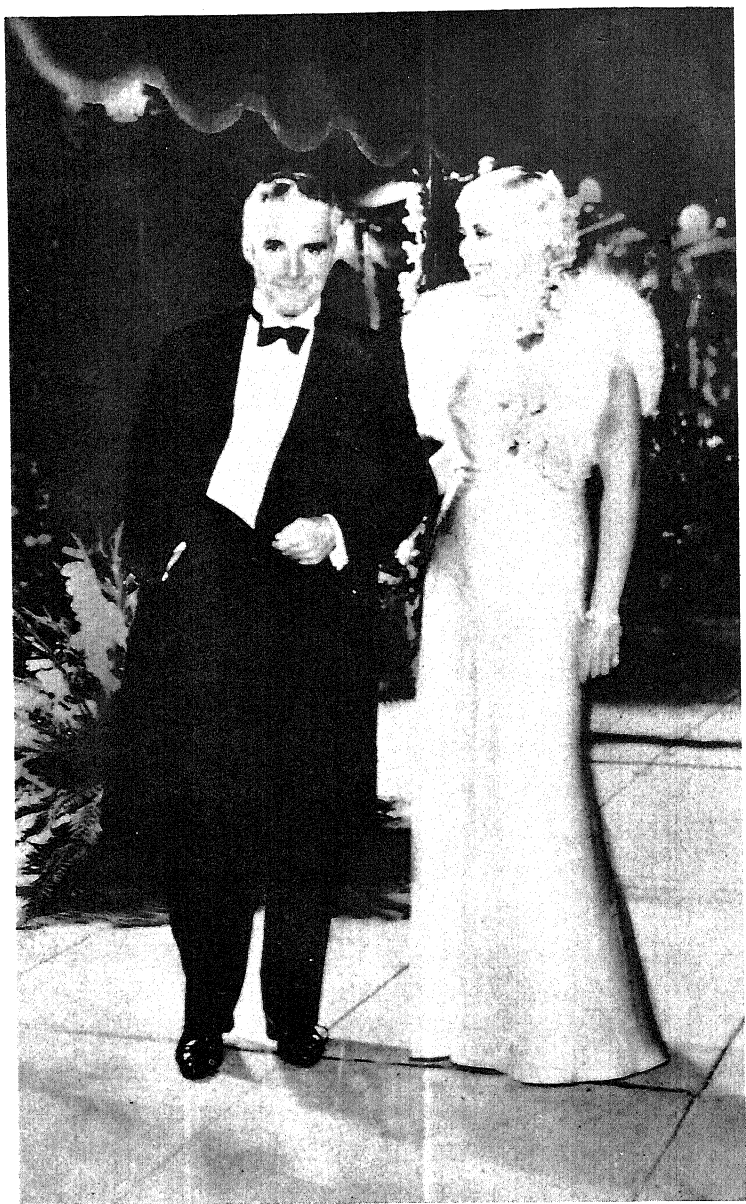
In Hollywood one sees on the screen today, the girl who sold him cigarettes in a night club or manicured his nails in a barbershop not so long ago; one sits at a restaurant table and is served by a waiter who was a Grand Duke; one tosses a coin for a boutonniere to a chap who wears in his own buttonhole a significant bit of ribbon. The traffic officer who asks, "Who the hell do you think you are?" one day, may be the singing star of the next musical picture you see; the waitress who indifferently serves you at a counter may be, within the week, discovered by a talent scout, groomed hurriedly, and set to portraying emotions to which she is, and will always be, a stranger.

Charlie Chaplin is indeed the greatest paradox of them all in the City of Paradoxes. King of Comedy by acclaim; King of Tragedy by the doubtful gifts of Nature, head and shoulders he stands above the motley crowd, not in physical stature, for he is only a little chap, but in true measure of an artist. Among the multitudes of celebrities, the sycophants, the fallen in rank; among the little souls catapulted by hysteria of publicity to pedestals upon which they stand ill at ease, Charlie roams the city, the best-known and the loneliest man in the world.

He loafs in his home high above the lights of the town, a sturdy home, the antithesis of the blatant show places of the stars. The furniture has taken on through the years the comfortable



Recent photograph of Paulette Goddard (Marion Paulette Goddard Levee).



Charlie and Paulette Goddard attend a preview at Grauman's Chinese Theater.

feeling of use; the chairs bear the marks of many an all-night talk before a great wood fire, with a few good friends. He plays the piano, an original theme; he paints on a canvas which may be completed—or may not; he plays tennis with a friend who has happened in, or wanders about his garden alone. Hollywood, the legend that gave him outlet for his highest expression, is away to the east and below. He ignores its newest excitement; he knows the names of fewer film stars than the visitor to Hollywood from British South Africa, knows.

He lives in Hollywood because there is no social structure, no untoward convention, to which he must conform. And yet, from an indifferent subject of the British crown, he has reached a high position of ethical dignity. He is a citizen of the world. And he remains, to the end, the uncouth servant of his own emotions.

In his work he has for a decade defied the changes of time, which is an artist's privilege. Among the producers struggling for perfection of sound, Charles Chaplin, the producer, restricted Charlie Chaplin, the actor, to the medium of speechless film. He was quite logical in this, holding the motion picture a completely visual pantomimic medium. And though he lives much in a world of thought and ideas, he believes sincerely that true art reduced to its simplest terms is not meant to arouse thought or to convey it but to restore in us freshness of vision, a more emotional

glamor, a more vital sense of life. He concedes no complexity in a complicated world. He has, for many years, maintained the audacity of his convictions.

Totally without the natural vanity of an actor, he is the living presence of the inherent conceit of the genius. His wild sense of independence and his humility in the face of his work both speak to us of courage, of an enrichment of his conception of life.

Charlie Chaplin will stay up all night, walking the length of his living room, gesticulating forcibly, talking volubly on a subject about which he knows practically nothing, and leave his listeners convinced that he is amazingly intellectual. He is intellectual, too, without being actually intelligent.

He is, at heart, a faithful friend, but because of his sharpened sensibilities, his shrinking from coldly trivial realities, he is one not always to be depended upon.

He is the champion of the downtrodden even while he is on the side of the despot.

He conceals disdain of individuals with an engaging charm; he cloaks his distrust of most men with a disarming smile.

He is childish in his frequent quarrels, but is always above seeking revenge.

Charlie is flattered when others take him seriously but, aside from his work, does not take himself seriously at all, and even entertains a faint

contempt for the companion of the moment who does.

He is sad that the laughs he has given the world are born of his own sorrows and the contemplated sorrows of the world. He is happy when he remembers the satire he has projected as a warning against paralyzed emotions and denaturalized living.

He has, now, everything that the earth has to offer, yet nothing that he actually desires.

You can see him almost any day strolling down Hollywood Boulevard wrapped in the secret torture of his own thoughts and feeling, oblivious to the crowd, not seeing the shops with their catchpenny baubles. He does not see the faces of any who pass. And yet his love for humanity is a fundamental, deep-seated instinct. His love for the crowd depends upon his mood; at one time it will heal and restore him, at another it will frighten him, drive him deeper within himself.

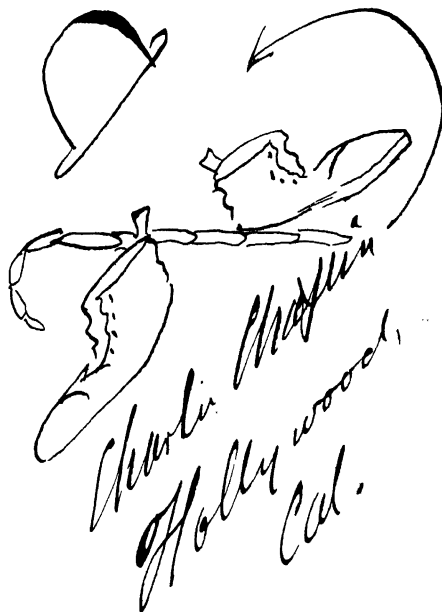
If you care, you may see him; he will not see you, even though you call yourself his friend. I saw him today, a slight, tense figure in a neat blue suit and bowler hat, his thick wavy hair almost white. I saw his mobile face plastic as a sculptor's wax, impassive, expressionless, his eyes two opaque windows to the world. His eyes, deep-set and cloudy blue, looked out. I could not look in.

You can see him at other times in the evening after a party or after sitting aloof and withdrawn

for hours, in a night club with the woman of his current choice. He will be strolling, alone, through the east side of downtown Los Angeles seeking the only real companionship he has ever known—that of his own dark thoughts. Among the flophouses, the ten-cent picture houses, the pawnshops, the darker haunts of human misery, he walks. It is as if he wishes to assure himself, after a glittering evening of false gaiety, of the acrid smells, the *feeling* of the degradation of the slums which gave him birth and which have given to his sensitive mind's eye, the whole picture of human foibles—and human wisdom. There alone, on an island of his own making, the pitiable driftwood of humanity floating about him, he can recapture, as nowhere else, the suffering, the injustice, and the cruelty which have given to the world his comedy—and his tragedy.

His love of London fog is another expression of his intense introspectiveness. Certainly he needs no stars, no high places, no illusion of vast space to give him perspective. His vision enables him to see—always—futility.

Charlie Chaplin is a millionaire many times over, in terms of wealth; he is a pauper in happiness. With his money he can buy any commodity of necessity or luxury, of ancient or modern craftsmanship, which is offered to the elect of riches. But the little sad-faced jester knows in his heart that none of these things is worth the having. He



Autographed "crest" given to the writer.

can never buy the thing he has sought all his life—happiness, or even contentment.

The pathos he has achieved on the screen is not, in any sense, synthetic miming. The satire he portrays is his very own. The patched shoes that take him away from the woman-image in his heart are all too real; they are the symbol of the victory of the nonessential, the inevitable loneliness of the great of heart and mind in a world that measures worth by externals. The little tramp of the screen is no less frustrated in his pictures than the suave, self-contained millionaire in real life who is the envy of his more unfortunate fellows. The tramp cannot achieve his heart's desire. To satisfy, were it possible, the hunger of his creator would quench the fires of his unfathomable genius.

He sits at the console of his organ, in the cold mausoleum of his home where no real happiness has been, and invites his soul with rambling improvisations worthy of a Beethoven; he asks Einstein to his home and convulses him with impudent impersonations of the great.

He is appalled at the suffering of others but makes no effort to alleviate it. This is because he knows the futility of seeking happiness. He sees the struggling artist starving to capture his dream on canvas and extends no hand to help him. He knows the emptiness of success. He suffers more than most of those he pities; you see, his capacity is greater.

Remembering the many times he has sought the elusive, the unattainable for himself, and the disastrous consequences, Hollywood shrugs its shoulders and dismisses it with, "He is a glutton for punishment." But does Hollywood know that it is the pursuit that is all-important?

With the naïveté of a child he will always expect the outward beauty of a woman to contain an understanding of his inordinate love of beauty, a sympathy with his moods. He will, because of her perfection of face and form, presume her ability to share that strange, dark, inner world he inhabits, a world inexplicable to any but himself. And always he will be wounded when she attempts to bring him to the conformity of a simple domestic bliss. He cannot make her understand that a comet stuck in a candlestick gives off a blinding light, can never be the dim, constant flame of a candle.

A great artist carries humanity within himself, and can upon occasion bring to life before our eyes its multitudinous expressions; Charlie Chaplin with one theme holds a mirror to our blunted vision. It is a vastly comprehensive role, yet, reduced to its simplicity, it is a medium through which he asks the few questions lying nearest all men's hearts, "Why am I here?" and "Whither am I going?"

Compelled by some driving urge within him, he will always leave his books, his music, his painting,

the companionship of his solitary walks; dogged by the genius that he holds, a bitter and dour companion for his solitude, a driving master of his soul, he will seek everlastingly that which he shall never find.

Seeing the little King of Tragedy in the fumbling for happiness he has missed, one wishes for him a love which, apart from surface glamor, creates its own splendor from within the heart.

But one knows that the King must walk alone, "forever seeking romance, but his feet won't let him."



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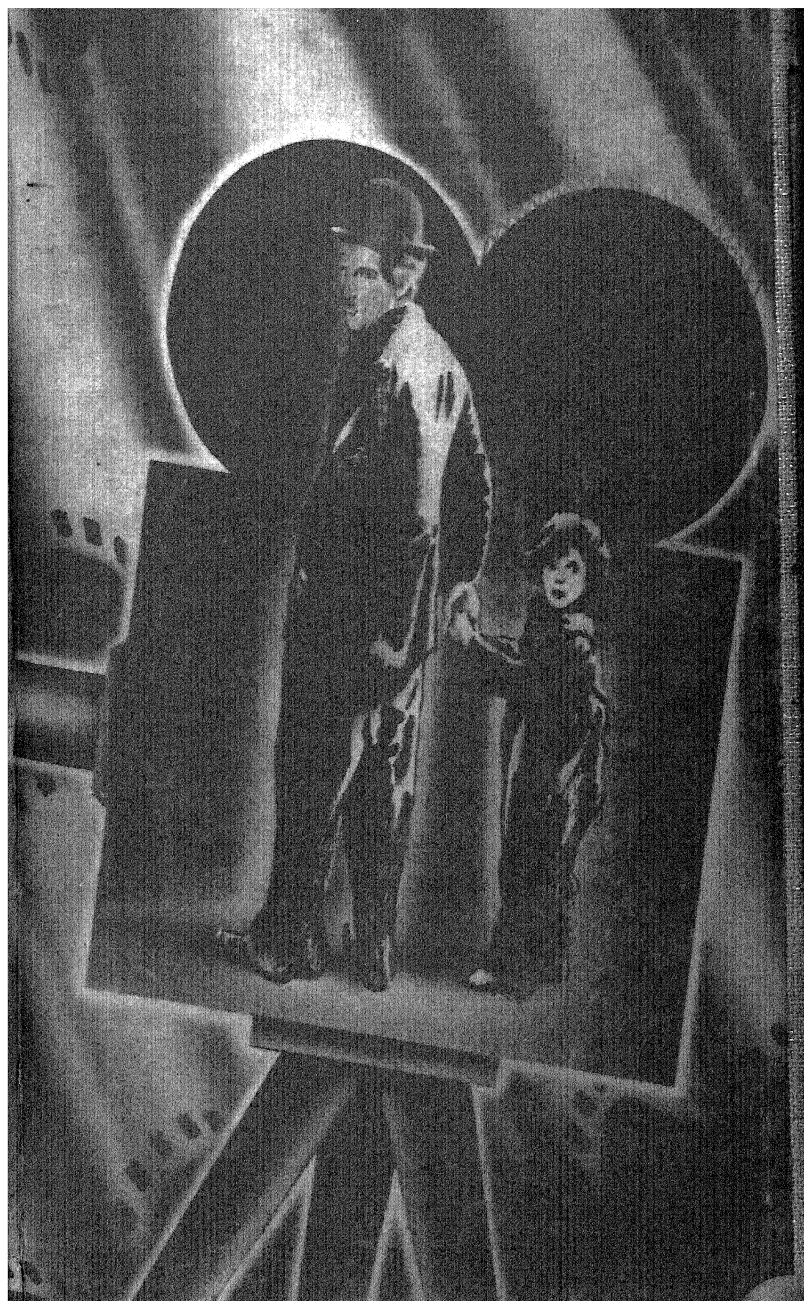
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